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PICTURESQUE SKETCHES

OF

GREECE AND TURKEY.

By AUBREY DE VERE.

38007

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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PICTURESQUE SKETCHES OF GREECE AND TURKEY.

CHAPTER I.

EXPEDITION TO DELPHI.

Arts of Antiquity—Way to Corinth—Nemea—Character of Greek Mountains — Greek Scenery and Greek Character — Corinth — Lutrarki — A Child's Consolation — Embarkation for Delphi—Arrival at Salona—Gulf of Lepanto and surrounding Mountains —Flowers in Unreclaimed Lands—Greek Agriculturists—Plain of Cirrha—A Parnassian Ravine—Rock Temples—Castri—Site of Delphi—The Sacred Cleft and Oracular Shrine—Loss of its Memorials—Fountain of Castalia.

MUSING much on the monuments I was leaving behind, I pursued my way toward Corinth. When we abandon our seat by the sea-shore, and walk inland, our ears are for a long time filled with a murmur as of many waters, and we fancy that the tide is still coming in all around us. It was thus that the images of those vast architectural rocks clung to my eyes; and difficult indeed I found it to shake off the questionings

with which they filled the mind. Whence came those huge stones? How were they lifted? What strong impulse, or what sustained instinct, compelled an unknown race which lived thousands of years ago to raise them to the top of that steep, and to plant them one on another? Assuredly there are other forces in the world besides those connected with the physical needs or the selfish desires of men; and that is but a blind philosophy which takes no account of them. The passion, whether religious or patriotic, that separated those rocks from their mountain beds, and made them a wonder to all time, was a principle stronger than winds or waves, or the madness of the people. That must have been a marvellous race which was visited by such aspirations; and yet but for the accidental survival of Homer's poems, we should have known nothing of it. How comes it that no more accurate traditions existed of that race in the days of Pericles; for if they had then existed, they would not since have been lost? In the other fine arts, that race seems to

have made but little progress; and yet the architectural monuments which it has left us suggest the idea that it must have possessed a knowledge of mechanical arts lost in more recent times. Centuries later, the love of the gigantic in architecture continued in many parts of the world, especially among the Romans; and yet how seldom do we meet with anything approaching to those colossal remains! Did this circumstance arise from the fact that mechanical inventions once known had been forgotten; or did the sons of younger earth inherit a strength of nerve and sinew compared with which later races are degenerate? When we call to mind the rapid bound in advance which the human family seems to have made within but a few centuries of the flood, and the works which they executed within the same period, we can hardly help imagining that the diminished duration of man's life is a type of a corresponding loss sustained in his physical and intellectual powers.

Such meditations must often, I think, occupy the mind of those who have visited the remains

of the "golden Mycenæ." If they should prove oppressive or perplexing, a better remedy can hardly be found than a ride from that spot to Corinth. On our left we passed near to the field of Nemea, the games of which, during successive centuries, concentrated the eyes of all Greece. Nothing now remains to mark the spot, except a stadium six hundred feet in length, and three pillars of the temple of Jupiter. Our way was but one degree less beautiful than that by which I had journeyed from Epidaurus to Nauplia. The more I observed them, the more I was impressed by the peculiar character of Grecian mountains which is different from that of all others I know. In Asia the mountains lift themselves up in smooth masses and solemn domes, white if the spring be not far advanced, otherwise green, even when seen from a distance, owing to the depth of the soil and the purity of the air. The Alpine summits pierce the blue sky with sharp wedge and glittering spire; and those of the Apennines rise up, ridge beyond ridge, like frozen

waves, and rake the clouds with rough and woody crags. Equally different from all these are the mighty terraces, and platforms, and mountain cliffs, which, in Greece, clasp as with a wall the bright bays, or the green plains—plains they must be called, not valleys, for they more often rise slightly toward the centre than are hollowed out into basins. The extreme luxuriance of these plains is in striking contrast with the majestic ranges that encompass them, which are not more graceful in their outlines than they are severe in their geological structure. Spare and lean, and bony, as it were, as the head of an Arab horse, or the hand of his rider, their rigid precipices rise perpendicularly from the fields and flowers, fleshed over with little vegetation except that of the wild thyme, so that at a little distance their colouring is that of a pale grey or lilac; and, while looking on them, you remember their marble quarries.

In every country we observe an analogy between the scenery and the character of

the people. In Greece I could never remark this contrast between the mountains and the plains without being reminded of an analogous difference between the character of the Greek intellect and of the Greek temperament. The former was pre-eminently severe, muscular, and masculine; while the latter, even in the better days of Greece, tended to the epicurean and the unstable. Perhaps the charge to be brought against the Greeks is not really one which affects their peculiar temperament so much as it condemns them for having allowed their character to be so much determined by that temperament. The temperament, taken separately, ought to be, as theirs was, susceptive, apprehensive, open to all impressions of the leasurable and the beautiful; yet such a emperament will be but too apt to degenerate nto voluptuousness and inconstancy, if it be ot subordinated to a resolute will and a spiritual ind. The different portions of human nature have different offices, and can only work well when they work in due subjection, the lower to

the higher; for the especial merit of the servant is often that which disqualifies him from the office of a master. The merit of the whole is something different from that of the parts. Scepticism, for instance, is very far from being a habit characteristic of the noblest intellects, yet the Understanding, taken as a separate faculty, is essentially sceptical; although, working in subordination to the higher Reason and the Moral Sense, it does not necessarily lead a man to scepticism. Its especial office is to doubt, to try, to prove all things; nor does the fact that a man possesses an understanding peculiarly subtle in sceptical inquisition demonstrate more than that he possesses a singularly powerful understanding. Such a faculty is likely to be dangerous or useful, according as he allow himself to be ruled by his understanding alone, or employs it in due and graduated confederation with higher gifts. The dull has little merit in not doubting, and the cold in withstanding the temptations of sense. It was the misfortune of the Greeks that during their declining period

the understanding gradually usurped upon the reason; and the temperament, rather than the moral sense, became the representative of the man.

To return, however, from the Greek character to Greece. The day was propitious, and the ride as agreeable as I could wish in every respect except one. My horse, very different from those which used to bound beneath me over the Athenian plains, had two serious defects: he would not go on unless I gave him a loose rein, and he could not stand on his legs unless I held the bridle tight. In other respects, as my trusty guide remarked, he was unexceptionable. Before many hours the castle-like Acropolis of Corinth was once more in view; and, although the day was not far advanced, it already flung its mighty shadow far over the sea. Not without regret did I leave at my right hand the road to the eastern port, by which Athens is reached, and advance along that which skirts the gulf of Lepanto, terminating in Lutrarki, a little village about six miles beyond

Corinth, and constituting its western port. At Lutrarki I procured a decked boat; not fewer than eight boatmen insisting on being my crew, and engaging to take me first to Delphi, and then to Patras, where I was to meet the Austrian steamer bound for Corfu and Ancona. "How soon," I asked, with the aid of my interpreter, "shall I find myself at Patras?" "That depends," they answered, "on the delay you make at Delphi." "What ought to be the length of the voyage, independent of a visit to Delphi?" They laughed and answered "Ten hours perhaps—or perhaps a day—or two days—or (the eight men lifting up three fingers each) it may be three days." Finding that my Greek friends were far too shrewd to commit themselves to the calculation of an average, I dismissed from my mind all western notions of punctuality, and began to think of laying in store of provision.

It was with difficulty that anything of the sort was procured. Fortunately I had brought some tea with me, and all that I wanted in

addition was a little bread and milk. The bread was near at hand, and for the milk, my servant sent a messenger to a neighbouring valley, where it was reported that cows had been lately seen. As I walked up and down the shore, somewhat vexed at losing so favourable a breeze, I heard the boatmen clapping their hands in exultation; and my servant, coming up to me with the importance of an ancient herald laden with the tidings of a victory, announced that he had made out a young pig, and that we should have a wonderful feast. "But the milk," I said, "what news of that?" Milk! he advised me not to think about it. He had already found out butter. Could I not put that into my tea? It was admirable butter —"veramente stupendo." After a little time the pig was cooked, and our party had eaten the greater part of it, when the wailing of a child from a cottage hard by assailed our ears. Now and then it was hushed, but it rose again more vehemently than before. I enquired what occasioned the lament; and my servant replied

that it was no consequence, but that, in fact, the little pig had been a pet belonging to a child in the cottage, who was distressed at its untimely fate. Much shocked at his loss and at our Thyestean feast, I sent to enquire in what way I could make the child amends for the injury. In a few minutes three men brought me back an answer, (the Greeks always think that too many persons cannot be employed on the simplest errand,) stating that the child had at last been prevailed on to wipe its eyes, and had sent me word that what would please him most was a slice of the pig, with a good deal of fat attached to it. I sent it to him, of course, and lost as little time as I could in imitating his philosophy. Few things are more curious than the mode in which the affections, passions, and appetites change into each other. I have heard it asserted, that animals which eat their young, begin by licking them out of parental affection. It is a pity that the change should always be from the higher instinct to the lower. How interesting it would be to observe a human

instinct supervening upon an animal one—to detect Russia, for instance, betrayed into something like a parental affection for Poland, and seeking with her a union not stimulated merely by ungovernable appetite.

The delay was fortunate in one respect, as it enabled me to extend my hospitality to a Greek woman, a soldier's wife, who wished to make her way to Salona, where she was to rejoin her husband, and who applied to me for a passage in my boat. She looked interesting and was rather sad—why, I did not discover, as I could maintain no conversation with her in Greek. In the East, however, to talk is no necessary part of good breeding: people converse, or are silent, according to their mood: and as we sat side by side in the stern of the boat, we had, at least, the songs of the sailors to amuse us. No dolphin was attracted by that chime through the moonlit waters, and Arion, I felt persuaded, was a much better musician. When it grew late, I made over my cabin to my companion, who had, I fear, but a bed of gravel to

repose on, and lay down on the deck, roofed in by my many-skinned capote, the hood of which effectually protected my head without the aid of a hat. Our breeze slackened before we had sailed halfway from Corinth to Parnassus, nor could the sailors enliven it again by song, whistle, or malediction. I cared little about the matter, for I enjoyed the present, and saw, over that agreeable foreground, glimmering views of a future, which, even not so seen, would have been inviting. There I lay, sleepy, but sufficiently awake to hear the rustling of our keel as it slid through the water when the breeze for a moment filled the sail, and, during the intervals, the babbling of that sail in a lighter air. Through my half-closed eyelids I could see also the silver plane of the waters, and the red cap of a sailor bending towards me, now and again, as he dipped his head to let the boom pass over it. I remembered that before morning our boat would have drifted into the shadow of the Parnassian and Heliconian ridges—nay, that every moment, slowly as we

advanced, we were drawing nearer to the mystical centre of Greek religion, the fount of inspiration and the oracular shrine. It was no business of mine to hold the rudder: it was no duty of mine to pull the oar. I was contented —the world seemed to hang well-balanced on its centre. While I thus mused, I found that my head, at least, could balance itself no longer, and dropped asleep.

The next morning we reached Salona, and I bade adieu to my fair companion, who, I hope, soon rejoined her husband. We made each other very civil speeches on parting; nor did it the least signify that neither of us understood the language of the other, as, no doubt, each interpreted in the best sense what was said with so much gravity. In spite of my servant's remonstrances, I refused to take horses, knowing that they would prove but a hindrance to exploring among the rocks, and not thinking a walk of five miles, terminated by Delphi, very formidable. The scenery of Delphi and its neighbourhood, I have no hesitation in saying, is the

finest that I have ever seen ; and I have visited all the most beautiful regions of Europe. The mountain ranges at both sides of the gulf are from eight to nine thousand feet in height; and though many of the Swiss mountains are loftier, the table-land of the valleys from which you contemplate them is generally so elevated as to take much from their apparent height. Nor do I believe that the Swiss mountains rise to a greater height from the level of any of the lakes which they adjoin, than Parnassus rises from the Gulf of Lepanto—that noblest of lakes, whose breadth, vast as is the expanse, is never too great for beauty ; and whose shores are enriched successively with associations, Egyptian, heroic, classical, Roman, Crusading, Venetian, and Turkish.

The plain of Salona is ample, rich, and soft, swelling gradually and slightly upward toward the middle, and sinking, on one side, down to the mountain walls, and on the other to the sea. The green expanse is closed at its eastern and western ends by the mountains, which slant in

steep headlands into the gulf. The remoter border of the plain drops with an indescribable grace, and with curves that can only be compared to those of a human form, into three dark glens, which wind between cliff and crag into the labyrinthine mountains. Of these three glens the midmost is that which leads to Delphi. We had to walk at least an hour before we reached its entrance. Our way at first extended over a grassy expanse, if that can be called grassy in which the flowers out-number the green blades. That plain could not have been more richly carpeted if our vanished Eden had been buried beneath it, and strove to force its way up again. No one can guess the beauty of flowers who does not see them under such circumstances. A single flower is a beautiful object; but if you contemplate many at once, it should not be in a trim parterre, where the space is trifling and the colours are arbitrarily assorted, but in those meadowy masses which deck the wilderness in lands at once fruitful and unreclaimed. Where the soil, unviolated for

ages by the plough, is rich as that of our gardens, and the climate is fresher than that of our parks, and warmer than that of our conservatories, Nature clothes the earth with flowers as lavishly as she clothes a tropical bird with feathers. In her abundance caprice has no part, and the harmony of colours always equals their profusion. So was it here. The poppies, the waving anemones, and countless flowers besides, extended their streams of crimson or of purple in long flowing curves, (each kind, no doubt, attracted by the soil that suited it best,) as if Spring had here emptied her urns with a prodigal hand, and flooded the world with glory.

Having traversed about half the plain, we found ourselves within an olive-wood which occupies its centre. It was not one continuous forest; for in the midst of its old and gnarled stems, through which the horizontal light of early morning levelled its shafts, rather tinted with green than blunted, there extended opens of all shapes and every size in which agriculture

began to encroach on the pasture land, or pasture to contend with the wilderness. Here, as in a colony, the newly-reclaimed land was too rich to require a careful culture; and I was amused by the careless hilarity with which the peasants prosecuted their light toils. They knocked the ground (I cannot say they dug it) with a sort of shovel, the iron part of which was placed at right angles to the wood, so as neither to require them to stoop nor to lean their foot upon it. With nature's good will apparently, and without either solicitation or compulsion, they demanded the fruits of an unexhausted soil. In other opens amid the wood people were employed in harrowing the ground, a process which they effected after a manner quite as singular. The harrows of course required to be loaded, but the labourers were far above seeking stones for that purpose. They adopted a much simpler expedient, sitting cross-legged, after the Turkish fashion, upon the harrow, as close as they could pack, and allowing their grey or mouse-coloured oxen to drag it very

much at their own discretion amid the blades of struggling corn; while they themselves swung about in their white kilts and red caps, laughing and telling stories. One hardly knew whether to call them labourers or revellers. Indeed thus drawn about they looked like nothing so much as sea-gods with monsters yoked to their car, who had feasted too long with Neptune, or the "blameless Ethiopians," and mistaken the land for the sea."

Emerging from the road and traversing the rest of the plain, celebrated in ancient times as the hallowed plain of Cirrha, we reached the midmost of the three ravines. We did not enter into its depths; but scaling the precipice at its left side, followed its tortuous course along the higher level. Unwinding from the heart of the Parnassian mountains, toward which our faces were turned, that ravine gradually descended toward the plain we had left, long, dark, and narrow, walled at each side by perpendicular cliffs, which shone in a dazzling light rendered yet more glaring by its contrast with

a dusky and slender olive-wood that streamed like a river along the bottom of the glen, following its sinuosities, and tracking a narrow river unseen from the heights above. Slowly, though the way was smooth, we advanced along our ascending terrace, which was girt on the left with mountains, as was also the terrace that surmounted the precipice on the opposite side of the valley. Slowly I advanced, for it was into a region of wonderment as well as of beauty: at every step new objects disclosed themselves with a bewildering profusion; every turn opened out a longer perspective of white crags and rocks jutting out to rocks; and every rift in the mountain walls at each side revealed some distant peak, the base of which was hidden in cloud, while its snowy summit flashed in a separate chasm of azure sky, and glanced over its separate gorge into the sacred domain of Apollo.

As we ascended, the air was refreshed with cooler gales from the regions of snow, and with the narrowing glen the shadows grew more

dense. Contrasted indeed with the white rocks at the opposite side, and with the small white cloud which was occasionally blown into our ravine from a neighbouring glen, (for each glen has its own breeze, which wanders through it as through the tube of a musical instrument,) those shadows, dim and watery in all places, lay beneath the projecting ledge, dark as a raven's wing. Here and there we passed chambers excavated in the cliff, with what intent it is hard to say. The larger looked like rock temples: the smaller were apparently vaults for the purpose of interment, constructed perhaps before the Greeks began to burn the bodies of the dead. These small chapels are all of them perfectly symmetrical and almost quite dark. The roof of each consists of an arch in the rock: opposite to the entrance, and at each end, is an oblong hollow, excavated out of the stone, and resembling a sarcophagus; and over each sarcophagus the rock is vaulted so as to form a sort of pall. As we drew nearer to the Delphic shrine these monumental chapels

became more numerous; and we passed a many cells carved in the rock, and plain intended for votive offerings. Here and there we came upon blocks of hewn stones, and the substructions of mighty walls; as if the platforms had once been crowned with temples, or as if some race past away, taking the hint from nature, had converted the symmetrical terraces of mountain and cliff into a more regular architecture.

An hour after we had entered the glen we arrived at the village of Castri, built in the neighbourhood, if not on the site of Delphi. The ancient city breaks up here and there through the new village like round stones in a road gradually displacing the gravel with which they had been covered, or some indestructible religion forcing its way back through younger superstitions. Wandering among its narrow streets I frequently came upon a gigantic capital pointing its polished traceries through the weeds that had grown over it, or a fragment of a cornice carved as delicately as if it had been

altar. In many places indeed the houses are half new and half old; the lower portions of the walls, or at least the foundations, consisting of the ancient masonry, upon which was piled a modern superstructure of pebbles, mud, wood, and straw. The effect was singular, and reminded me that thus also the whole of the domestic and social system of Greece had apparently rested upon the foundation of its great religious ideas—a circumstance, however, by no means peculiar to the Grecian, or, indeed, to any ancient polity. The situation of Castri thus nested high among its rocks much resembles that of a Swiss village seated on some aerial elevation, amid its grey ledges and its grassy slopes. The difference, however, is as striking as the similarity, and consists in that marvellous union of luxuriance with sublimity which characterises Greek scenery. Around Castri, in place of orchards white with apple blossoms and rough with knotted sprays, was the green and golden lemon-grove, with pale yellow fruit, and smooth leaves, the younger of them trans-

lucid. The little lawns amid the cliffs were waving with anemones, (the thinnest floral texture almost that can sustain the weight of colour,) not set in orderly array with flax and peas. The breeze, heavy from the orange bower, was met by the healthier sea-scented gale, which snatched a blossom from the almond-tree, or dropped a feather from an eagle's wing upon the breast of the myrtle thicket.

A very short distance further on is the sacred cleft, close to which stood the oracular shrine, and out of which issued that intoxicating vapour upon which Apollo once scattered, as was deemed, the might of inspiration. The cleft is a narrow chasm in the rocks, which in this place very nearly approach each other, and are quite smooth. Its length is considerable; gradually its breadth diminishes; and it is so lofty, that the sky seen above it looks like a strip of purple ribbon. Adjoining this cleft was the temple of Apollo; the face of the rock, at right angles with the chasm, was the inner wall of that temple, and not only retains

the mark of the chisel, but is also different in colour from the rest. Its vast tablet is still sacred from weather-stains and from vegetation; but its summit and its edges are fringed with yellow flowers, of a kind which I have not seen elsewhere, and of which I carried away a handful as relics.

No other trace of the Oracular Temple remains. It is gone, with all its sacred treasures and mysteries. We look in vain for the mystic tripod, from which the Pythia, who had breathed the inspiring vapour, flung abroad her prophecies in agonistic ecstasies that terrified the priests who beheld her, and sometimes deprived her of life. Its shrine no longer contains the gifts of kings, Asiatic and European, or the trembling elliptical stone, supposed to have been the centre of the earth, the spot at which met the two doves which Jupiter had loosed from the opposite extremities of the world. As vainly do we look for the triple serpent of brass, found in the Persian camp after the battle of Marathon, and deposited here for centuries.

Yet Delphi has still its memorials, though when you seek the Oracular Temple (the heart of the Greek religion), you find, as on the site of the Eleusinian mysteries, a blank. Such a blank is perhaps not to be regretted: the ardent desire that a visible memorial existed, is in itself a spiritual memorial; and the chief sanctuaries of ancient religion, if obliterated, have at least escaped a worse profanation. That fane, the opening of whose gates each spring shook the ancient world with hope and fear, and sent a tremor of expectation through the hearts of kings, fell, and no one knows when:—it slid from its basis into oblivion without a sound, like the nest of the bird that built amid its eaves. The treasury of Crœsus, memorable for his piety as for his wealth, is gone also; and we look in vain for the three thousand statues, brazen, golden, and marble, which once adorned the streets of Delphi. The Hall of the Amphictyonic Council, the political centre of Greece, and the body whose decrees every Hellenic State had vowed to enforce by arms, has also disappeared. Some

traces of an ancient Stadium are still visible, as well as many fragments of the city walls. The chief memorial, however, of classic times and mythic dreams is one which nature created and which nature maintains, renewing it momently as it fleets away,—the Castalian fount. Fed from above by the Parnassian snows, it sparkles and chimes in the basin hewn for it out of the rock; and falling from the lofty region on which Delphi stood into the ravine which we had tracked on our path thither, mingles its waters with the river Pleistus; after which, receiving some tributary streams on its way, it winds through the plain of Cirrha, and finds rest in the waters of the Crissean bay. I drank of it and washed both face and hands in it. Whether it still confers the gift of poetic inspiration, as when the Muses danced around it, I cannot say: I can assert, however, that purer or fresher water is not to be found.

CHAPTER II.

RETURN FROM DELPHI.

Character of Parnassian Scenery—An Olive Wood—A Storm—Dance of the Greek Boatmen—Revels on the Shore by Night—Moonrise—Philosophy of the Oracle—Demoniacal Inspiration—An unnecessary Supposition—An Imperfect Faith ever placed in Oracles—Physical Effects of the Delphic Vapour—An Extraordinary Penetration assisted by Imposture.

LULLED by the sound of the Castalian fountain, and cooled by its freshness after the pleasant fatigue of a long ascent, I lay on the grass in a sort of dreamy state, half asleep and half awake, until the day was far advanced, and my guides were eager to return. I bade adieu to Delphi, not without regret, but yet with a strong sense that there is less cause for regret in leaving what is of first-rate than what is of inferior excellence; because, in the former case, one carries away recollections that can never die, and thoughts perhaps the seed of brighter visions than those which we have lost. On my

way to Delphi I was often hurried forward by my impatience: on my way back I was glad to loiter, and thus had more opportunities of studying the scenery. That scenery united qualities which Nature alone can combine without confusion, presenting, as it were, the essence of all species of material beauty elevated and enlivened by a spirit peculiarly its own. I have already remarked on its union of sublimity with richness: not less remarkable seemed to me its union of mystery with joyousness. Its beetling cliffs and promontories looming through cloud affected the spirits with nothing of mountain melancholy; its snowy ranges looked neither ghostly nor forlorn. For this circumstance it is not easy to account, but we can at least explain it in part. There were no pine forests, with their mournful sighs and monotonous whispers; there were no glaciers to speak of endless winter colder than the grave. These mountains, lofty as they are, wear the sunny livery of the south, and opening out their breasts to a southern exposure, seem to enjoy

a double portion of the Sun-God's favour. From this circumstance, as well as from the light colour of their rocks, whose smooth expanse reflects the light like a shield, and from the glorious pageantry of the vegetation wherever a flower can find room to grow, arises the fact that, from the countless peaks of snow that sparkle above you to the crocus at your feet, the character of the scene is jubilant, not less than sublime; that it lifts up the soul without ever casting down the heart; and that, though from its complexity it is bewildering, it yet never oppresses the spirits with awe. The Sun-God looks through the mountain labyrinth as through his own laurel, and drowns its terrors in light. Had it not been for these peculiar attributes, the scene would never have been frequented and celebrated by the Greek. As in some specimens of the Italian Gothic, an attempt was made to blend with that character of infinitude which belongs to Gothic architecture, an ornate beauty of detail and an elevated festivity, so, in these Delphic mountains, nature

seems resolved to astonish and entrance without subduing. The mystery is lightened, but the marvel remains.

This hilarity of effect was more observable on my return from Delphi than on my way thither, because, as we descended the hills, the ravine widened before us, letting in, every moment, a larger as well as a more various view. At every step the mountains about the sea were clustered in new and more fantastic combinations; while, gleaming through their glens, the Gulf of Lepanto appeared now like a river, now like a sea, and now like a series of lakes, various in size, and apparently at different elevations. This part of the Parnassian scenery is the most wonderful, but not, I think, the most beautiful. The most exquisite spot, I should say, is to be found a little beyond the line where the mountain crescent sinks into the plain, and at the confluence of the three ravines. Here spreads the olive-wood, through which I passed in the morning. On my return I had more time to explore it, and in its heart I discovered a scene

which I found it difficult to leave. It was a little lawn, formed by one of the opens in the wood, richly carpeted by flowers, and looked down into through woodland gaps by many a peak of snow. Through this lawn the two streams already named pursued their way from Parnassus to the sea. Obstructed in their course by some rocks, they divided into innumerable rivulets, which, branching abroad in all directions, veined the gravelly ground with silver, now gliding side by side in their beds, now mingling, now crossing each other, but ever interweaving their songs as well as their dance. One might have fancied that all the nymphs of ancient mythology had met in this peaceful spot to keep some high festival: indeed, as they conversed together, I could almost imagine that I followed the current of their stories, attending as I did to their voices as they changed from grave to gay. Among them rose a flowering laurel—shapely as Daphne herself. It was a tree, not a shrub; a daughter of the forest, slender and stately, with glassy leaves brilliant

as the ripples of those streams, and boughs that could not ward off the strong Phœbean shafts. Round this laurel the streams raced, and round many a juniper and feathery tamarisk, and by many a bank white with narcissi. All round the wood the mountains extended their arms; and the sea, heard faintly from the distance, curved inwards as though to meet it. If I could have built a temple by a wish, it would have been in this open space.

With so much to detain me by the way, it was not till evening that I rejoined my boat's crew on the shore. I soon found that had I returned earlier, it would have profited me nothing. The sound of the sea which I had heard from afar was an omen of commotion, though at that time there was little wind. Before I had gained the beach, the gale had broken loose, and nothing could induce the sailors to weigh anchor. The Greeks are expert sailors; but their coast has too many bays, inlets, and harbours, to allow of their being bold; and

like men who are rich in alternatives, they are deficient in resolution. Late in the evening, finding that nothing was to be done, I landed again, leaving half a dozen boatmen on board, beside two or three peasants, to whom I had promised a passage to the other side of the gulf. I paced up and down by the sea-shore for an hour, during which the crew slept in the boat. Suddenly they awoke, and cheering up with the simultaneous impulse of a choir of birds when the shower has passed, began, not to sing like those birds, but to dance with a zeal, or rather a fury, not to be described. Flinging themselves into a circle, they gesticulated with a wild impassioned grace; each man wielded his body as if it had been the thyrsus of a Bacchanal. A song rose up among them, which seemed to throw fresh fuel on the flame; and for hours the dance raged, as Homer says, "with the might of inextinguishable fire." I watched them till it was dark, and till I could see them only by the light of the torches which they had suspended in several parts of the boat.

The later it grew the higher they bounded, and the more swiftly their circles revolved. You might have fancied that Bacchus and his wood-Gods had mingled invisibly with the crew, and amused themselves from time to time by lifting the living wheel, and spinning it around. As they descended again on the deck after each bound, the little boat plunged beneath them, sending a ripple in among the reeds, and dashing with spray the sea-pink with which the margin was braided.

That spray ere long began to glitter with a pale blue radiance; for the moon, which had long since sent two broad, diverging beams aloft into the sky, swam up at last with a wide and perfect circle above the black, eastern steeps of Parnassus, and, gliding on from cloud to cloud, cast a fitful illumination upon the snows that covered its western terraces. This apparition only called up a louder song; and it is singular enough, that though the revellers danced together with perfect regularity, there was hardly any attempt at time or measure

in their chaunt. Every man exercised his private judgment on this subject, and the music consequently was edifying, rather from its independence than from its harmony. Notwithstanding this defect the dance was not more remarkable for its fierceness than for its grace, and the beauty dashed across its tempestuous movements, like that of forest branches waving in a storm. After the rising of the moon the people on the shore, resolving not to be outdone, assembled also, and amused themselves with game after game. One of their sports I remember thinking a dangerous precedent in revolutionary times. A number of men ranged themselves in a ring, while another set clambered up, and stood on their shoulders. Matters being thus prepared, the ring below began to spin round on its own axis with a gradually increasing velocity; the exalted personages above maintaining their footing as long as they could, but being, of course, one by one, tossed from their uneasy pedestals ere long. The dethroned powers then

took their places beneath, those who had previously supported them mounting their shoulders, on the principle that "turn about is fair play." Such a social amusement must be as dangerous a thing as that great Revolutionist, the French Shrug; and if I were a constitutional king, endeavouring to administer free institutions, (under which people never can take a joke, and often insist upon making inferences,) I would discourage it to the utmost of my power. The dance ended as suddenly as it had begun; and in a few minutes the people on the shore had dispersed, and those in the boat were asleep.

For another hour I continued to pace up and down along the beach, watching the clouds which raced and huddled across the sky, and that gleaming haven as still as glass, though the tempest raged around the rocks that enclosed it. At last I lay down, my head resting against a tree large enough to shelter me from such gusts as found entrance there. I endeavoured to sleep, but could not, for the memory of an

eventful day pressed upon me; and many a scene, which at the moment I had hardly noted, passed before my eyes. Such a day is fruitful of thoughts also as well as of images. When one visits a scene richly stored with human interests, the imagination opens itself out first to all the impressions that haunt it; but the understanding comes forward in turn with its inquest, and asks, "But how did it all happen? How might it, under the like circumstances, come about again?" In the case of Delphi and the oracle such questions are not easily answered. It is not difficult to understand how such scenery as that of the mountains in whose bosom Delphi is enshrined, shook the Greek imagination out of its accustomed Epicureanism, winged it for a higher flight, and in place of gay legends and palpable shapes, peopled the spangled lawns, and shadowy recesses, and glory-smitten rocks, with the visions of a more spiritual worship. But it is not so easy to determine what it was which preserved for the oracle its credit from age to age. Neither that keen

insight which belonged to the Greek intelligence, nor those traditionary records of early religion which imparted so much of philosophic truth to the Greek mythology, could have extended any aid to the Pythoness when consulted concerning simple matters of fact. Are we then to account for the oracles by imputing them merely to priestcraft, or after the fashion of those in early Christian times, who attributed them to inspiration, but to the inspiration of Evil Spirits? The latter supposition, I confess, seems to me unwarranted, because it is needless. "Nec Diabolus intersit nisi dignus vindice nodus." The Evil Spirit, and great Enemy of the human race, has shrines enough in human hearts without our allotting him one at Delphi; and human credulity seems sufficient to account for the belief so long reposed in a response which had always an even chance of turning out true, and which, taking into account the degree in which the event is determined by our expectations, had commonly many chances in its favour.

Coleridge, discussing the authenticity of ghost-

stories and apparitions, opposes them by a very singular argument. It is to this effect. We cannot have sufficient cause to believe in the truth of an apparition, if the man who asserts that he has seen it is himself not certain about it. Now that his belief is a matter of imaginative persuasion, not of intellectual or practical certainty, may be inferred from the fact that, while many persons have lost their senses from terror, when a ghost trick has been played off at their expense, no one has ever gone mad from the sight of an apparition not thus presented to him. What the imagination conjures up, the imagination can deal with, half-believing it, and, at the same time, not thoroughly convinced of its reality, though, perhaps, not conscious of a doubt. If, on the other hand, it is not the imagination of the beholder, but the intervention of another person, which has raised up the supposed apparition, the belief with which it is beheld, though ill-founded, is yet a *bona fide* belief, and, such being the case, a visitation from the world of spirits is something too dreadful

to be borne. An argument in some measure analogous may be adduced against the inspiration of oracles, to whatever source that inspiration be attributed. Why should we believe in them, if they neither thoroughly believed in themselves, nor were thoroughly believed in by those who consulted them? Now, that they had not full confidence in their own answers, may be inferred from the fact that those answers were so often susceptible of a double interpretation. There is good reason to think, also, that those who appealed to the oracles had not a perfect faith in them, although, as in the mood in which men witness a dramatic representation, they may not have consciously disbelieved. Their latent incredulity may be inferred from the circumstance that, if the oracular response threatened them with some dreadful calamity, they always, instead of submitting to their fate as inevitable, endeavoured to escape it. It is thus that enthusiasts who assert that the end of the world is to take place within a few years, buy, sell, and carry on their ordinary transactions not-

withstanding, much like other people; the fact being, not that they believe what they assert, but that they think that they believe it. If then, even in the time of oracles, belief in oracular inspiration was less a reality than it seemed, there is little reason why we should entertain it now, and impute them to a diabolical agency.

We know, moreover, that, without the interposition of spiritual Powers, there existed physical influences in connexion with the Delphic oracle quite sufficient, if backed by imagination and credulity, to produce important effects. The vapours which ascended at the Delphic cleft affected not only human beings, but the animal creation; so much so, that shepherds were first led to the spot by observing that the goats who approached it were filled with a strange delirium. Such transports may not unnaturally be supposed to have had the effect of electrifying the energies, and sharpening the penetration, of the Pythoness. There are, unquestionably, peculiar states of body, such as the phenomena of Mesmerism exhibit, in which, to say the

least, our ordinary faculties are much extended and refined. In such cases the patient, who has a morbid desire of exercising to the utmost his special privileges, and who, far from being a mere impostor, has probably an exaggerated confidence in his gifts, sees more than his neighbours could see, but yet does not scruple to make up for any deficiency in his powers by deception. To imposture he may, indeed, resort, without a distinct purpose to that effect, considering the unnatural state, especially as regards his consciousness, into which he has been thrown; and he will be greatly aided in carrying out the deception, through the desire secretly felt by spectators to witness a marvel. The Pythoness, possessed, as she undoubtedly was, by a peculiar afflatus, may thus also, with respect to circumstances with which she was imperfectly acquainted, at once have exercised an insight not usually hers, and, at the same time, have backed that insight by equivocal answers, and by trickery of other sorts. In this she was, probably, assisted by the ministering priests,

who, notwithstanding, may have sincerely believed in her supernatural powers. Without more of conscious bad faith, she would be aided by the enquirers themselves:—finally, she would be assisted by the fortunes of men, which culminate or decline with their hopes and fears; and of her failures the world would hear little, while ample credit was given to her for chance coincidences.

If there be truth in this view of the matter, the oracular response was indebted for its credit neither to supernatural inspiration, nor mainly to priestcraft, but to that species of mental illumination which latently exists in our nature, and to that imaginative credence, distinct alike from conviction and from conscious scepticism, which has its root in the human heart, and finds innumerable means of confirming its impressions. Alloyed the oracle must have been by baser influences, like the other parts of a religion which, not founded on the strength of truth, was frequently reduced to throw itself on the strength of falsehood. It does not, however, follow that

its influence did not on the whole tend to good, as the belief in apparitions has probably done. The seat of its power was chiefly in the imagination; and that Faculty, passing to and fro through man's whole being, and interpreting between its different portions, rests in the main on the Moral Sense, and is, therefore, an avenger of evil, and an inciter to all good works.

CHAPTER III.

VOYAGE FROM DELPHI TO PATRAS.

Continuance of the Storm—Ineffectual Attempt to put to Sea—Parnassian Harbour—Another vain Attempt at Navigation—Coast Scenery of Parnassus—Sunsets during a Week of Storm—Arrival at Lepanto—A Calm—Reflections on Greece—The Advantages derived from its Small Size—Proximity of its Rival States—Benefits from Compression—Variety of Greek Institutions—Character of the Greek Confederation—Benefits resulting from the Independence of its several States—Advantages which the Republican Principle derived from the small size of the Greek States—The Athenian Government no Democracy—Arrival at Patras—Departure of the Austrian Steamer—Return to Corfu.

At a very early hour the next morning I woke, (those who sleep on as rough a bed are likely to wake early,) and insisted upon casting loose and trying what we could do at sea. We effected but little; the gale was still violent, beside being right in our teeth; and after beating about for some time, and watching a stormy sunrise as it broke through the driving mist and reddened foam, we were obliged to let go our sheets, run before the wind, and take refuge in another bay on the indented coast,

within a few miles of Salona. Again we fastened the boat to a rock, and I made a solitary expedition among the mountains, notwithstanding the assurances of my boatmen that if I fell in with robbers they would cut off my nose and ears by way of a practical joke. I should not have quarrelled with an adventure less lasting in its consequences, and might not indeed have objected to losing the very small amount of money which I carried in my pocket, on condition of making acquaintance with some tolerably interesting specimens of the banditti kind. I neither met, however, nor expected an adventure of any sort, but enjoyed instead a succession of views as noble as rocks, mountains, and waves, in their wildest combinations can compose. The sea rendered it impossible that I should lose my way; and indeed, I could generally discern the bay in which our little boat lay rocking. I was, therefore, able to wander far about those plains which, grassy and flat, wound in among the roots of the precipitous mountains. Wearied

enough to sleep well, I returned at evening to my faithful boatmen, who made as many demonstrations of joy on my rejoining them as if we had been friends all our lives, and, lying down on the shingles in the bottom of the boat, slept till the morning.

The next day the storm was more violent than ever, and for several hours my boatmen declined any experiment of the sea beyond the rocks which gave us shelter. With philosophical good humour, and an indifference to delay which would seem almost miraculous in the western world, where leisure is a thing seldom known, and where men have lost the power of making idleness amusing or instructive, they roamed up and down the shore picking up shells. At first I did not understand what had thus inspired them with a sudden interest in conchology; but I soon discovered that the shells contained fishes, and that my crew were collecting their breakfast. They offered me a share of their spoils; but their repast was as uninviting as if it had consisted of snails, which

their fishes much resembled; and I preferred my own fare. Although, however, we had abundance of tea, there was neither a tea-pot to be found nor a kettle to boil water in. I was a little disconcerted at the prospect of being obliged to live, no one could guess how long, upon shell-fish. My ingenious servant, however, came to my aid, and his quick wits set everything right before long. After a short search he discovered in the boat a small cup of iron. He found also some dry branches, with which he kindled a fire on the stones in the bottom of the boat. Filling the cup with water, flinging a handful of tea into it, and then placing it on the fire, I soon had a cup of tea, which was not much the worse for being drunk out of the vessel in which it had been boiled. The discovery was a useful one, as for several days I had no other food.

Favoured by a lull in the course of the day, we put to sea once more: but the storm had ceased for an hour only to take breath and renew its energies; and we soon found it impossible

not only to make way toward Patras, but even to run across to the opposite side of the gulf, where we might have procured horses. Now, for the first time, I began to suspect I might miss the Austrian steamer, which calls at Patras once a fortnight. To provide against accidents I had allowed five days for a voyage which is often made in twelve hours; but several of those days had already passed away. Notwithstanding, I had seen enough of Austrian steamers to place a very firm reliance on their unpunctuality, and soon consoled myself by the assurance that even if I were a day late in arriving at Patras, the steam-boat was certain to be later still. I carried Delphi still in my heart, and had no objection to a few more rambles among the mountains in its vicinity. This was, ere long, a matter as to which we had no choice. Far off in the west the waters suddenly assumed that blackness more than "wine-black," which always makes a Greek sailor think it high time to run for the nearest harbour. The cloud descended over what, amid a lurid sky, had

seemed the luminous portal of the storm. Once again we got the boat before the wind, and in good time; for within a few minutes the gale swooped upon its prey, and rushed past us, raking the dark waters into foam. We had lost, within a quarter of an hour, what it had taken us ten times as long to gain, and racing along merrily, though against our will, soon found ourselves anchored in a narrow creek. My servant, who always assumed, though very unwarrantably, that I was much incensed at these disappointments, made his usual apologies for the weather of his country: "Such a thing," he assured me, hardly ever happened,—"never, except by accident; and never should occur again as long as he was in my service. We should take excellent horses at the other side of the gulf next morning,—that is, if we could run across in the night."

I passed another afternoon wandering about the green shores buffeted by wind and wave, or climbing the rocks, in whose caves the surge murmured with that subterranean thunder

of all music the deepest and the grandest, or listening in the hollow of the creek to a softer sound—

> "That lightest murmur of its seething foam,
> Like armies whispering where great echoes be." *

Sometimes I walked out upon a series of dark, flat ledges which stretched far into the sea, like the substructions of a mountain swept away. Over its remote western ridge the waves sent a bowery spray, which, rising at regular intervals, until it veiled the sinking sun and yellow west, descended again without noise, or a noise unheard in the distance. All around, amid these ledges, were countless sea-wells, the smaller of them just large enough for a bath, the larger extending into little lakes, but all of them so calm, that the long weeds hardly waved within their green pellucid depths, into which you might have fancied that you need but dip an arm in order to pick up a shell, though it would have required an expert diver to reach their bottom. The contrast between the elemental

* Sonnets by Charles Tennyson.

agitation all around the reef, and the serenity of those glassy cloisters within it, exercised a deep fascination. I could have been well consoled for the various delays unexpectedly thrown in my way if cheered only by the sunsets which glorified successively the storm of that week. Through windy gaps in the skies they tinged the sea-foam and the snowy ranges beyond the gulf, with sanguine streaks, bathing at the same time in gold the dewy thickets and green fields on the shore, and shooting a crimson beam from rock to rock and from cloud to cloud, along the confused and ragged limits of the mountain coast. Long after the fiery orb had sunk, and the ferment had waned from the western waters, the summits of the mountains suffered no other change than that from crimson to rose-colour, and again to lilac. The clouds in the highest region hung suspended and almost motionless, though drawn out into a feathery softness, and filled with radiance, as if their golden fleeces had drunk up the last light of day; while beneath them, the lower vapours

rushed in directions determined by their elevation, the lowest of all streaming along the misty current of the storm, and almost brushing the green sea.

The fifth morning after our departure from Corinth, as the moon was dropping into the sea, I prevailed on the boatmen to try our chances once more. After blustering about us for an hour, the wind changed in our favour. Ere long the peaks on each side the gulf made report of approaching sunrise, proclaiming with banner and standard, like so many successive heralds, the advent of the solemnity; and in a few minutes more a fulgent sphere of waters seemed to lift itself slightly up in the East, as if drawn from its level by the attraction of that mighty luminary which had but just detached itself from the deep. Before eleven o'clock we were drifting past the old walls of Lepanto. We were now within ten miles of Patras, and already I triumphed in the prospect of arriving just in time, and that without having missed aught of interest by the way, or set out an hour

too soon. Suddenly the wind fell, and in a few minutes more there was a dead calm. The boatmen took out their oars and pulled hard, and my servant assured me I was safe, for that after such a storm the Austrian steamer could hardly be within three days of its time. I believed him; and as we rowed slowly through sunny waters, almost calm in the shelter of the promontories, and elsewhere but slightly swaying with a smooth and sleepy motion, the memorial of perturbation past, my thoughts visited again and again the wonderful scenes I had visited.

It is when travelling in Greece that we practically recognise the marvellously minute scale upon which that country was moulded, the moral influences of which were destined to extend all over the world. You may look at the map and forget this circumstance; but it is brought effectually home to you when during a few days' ride you visit one after another a series of rival States, which in their polities, their social character, and their histories, were as distinct as the various kingdoms of Europe

now are. It was not till I had sailed for a few miles from Lutrarki, and observed the greater clearness with which the Parnassian ranges came out, that I realised the fact that Corinth and Delphi, two cities morally as opposed to each other as Washington and Mecca, were yet physically so close that the laughter of the midnight revellers might almost have met the hymns of the priests midway on the waters. What, again, could be more different than the character of Bœotia, sacerdotal, traditionary, unchanging, the Hellenic Austria, and that of the inventive and mercurial Attica? And yet from the same ridge of Parnes the shepherd descried the capitals of both. How remote from each other in character were Sparta, in which the whole life of man was one perpetual military discipline, and Athens, in which every one went on his own business after his own fashion. Yet the mariner ran across, in perhaps a day's sail, from the one territory to the other, passing on his way communities equally unlike both. How contrasted

were the various States of the Peloponnesus, for century after century at war; and yet from the summits of Mænalus, the wandering rhapsodist, placed immediately above Pallantium, the city of Pallas and Evander, and the Mother of Rome herself, beheld them all, or nearly all—the maritime cities of the Achaian league —the sacred plain of Elis, in which Greece celebrated its heroic games—pastoral and musical Arcadia, the Tyrol of Greece—the valleys dear to liberty of the much-suffering Messenians, its Switzerland — the walled territory and unwalled city of Sparta—Epidaurus, the sanctuary of the sick—Argolis, the most venerable of all in its associations, and its monuments, on which the Greek looked as we look on our Roman or Druidical remains. If, crossing the gulf of Lepanto, he passed from the Parnassian to the Pindan range, and Œta, the mountain of Hercules, he looked down, at the one side on the Thessalian valleys, on Dolopia and Phthiotis, on Doris and Phocis, and the plains of the Locrians; and, at the other, on the

valleys of Epirus, on Ætolia and Acharnania :— he might have seen Thermopylæ, the gate of Greece, and Delphi, its secret shrine : far off he might have discerned Actium and Pharsalia, on which the destinies of the Roman world were to be decided ; and more near, those quiet vales refreshed by the winding waters of the Achelous and Aous, and Arachthus, of Enipeus, and Peneus and Haliacmon, and a hundred streams besides, famous in ancient song.

We are too apt to connect the idea of greatness with that of extent. Unwieldy vastness, on the contrary, is a source of weäkness, and the most enormous empires have lain inert and barren for centuries, their mind being, as it were, insufficient to wield the huge and cumbrous body through which it was languidly diffused. The same confinement which is required to give explosive force to gunpowder is equally necessary to realise the might of human energies, which, without such compression, commonly run to waste. Concentration is always force ; and the mere number of men

needed in order to produce the most wonderful results is inconsiderable. We can easily indeed observe various modes in which the greatness of the Grecian States was eminently promoted by the narrow limits of each. A population comparatively dense made it necessary that government should be strong; while at the same time among races so enlightened it was equally necessary that the strong government should be just and liberal. To prevent that population from becoming excessive, much of prudence, of forethought, and of self-command must have been needed in forming the ties of life, as well as much of industry in agriculture and commerce, and much of enterprise in colonisation. A moral and political education thus ever advanced side by side. Once more, races kept apart by mighty ranges of mountains necessarily became rivals; but it was their propinquity to each other which realised that rivalship, and stimulated their advancing energies from day to day. The wars between State and State, moreover, were

by no means like ordinary border warfare ;—they were humanised by a common Hellenism, and had no tendency to barbarise. Neither did they resemble civil wars ;—on the contrary, in each community, the distinct integrity of which was commonly guaranteed by its geographical situation, a close political organisation and strong social sympathies, far from suffering any disruption or distraction, were rendered yet more necessary by a common danger, and a glory in which each man had his part. It is always in conjunction with military virtues, moral energies, and political duties, that the mental and imaginative powers receive their best development. So it was in Greece ; and the rival States, like forest trees, acquired a loftier stature because they had not room to spread.

How wonderful was the variety of polities exhibited in that narrow compass! As if Greece, in its political relations, had been intended to present an epitome of Europe, as Europe does of the World, there exists no form

of government, theocratical, monarchical, or republican, aristocratic, democratic, or military, of which her little States did not furnish examples. As if also the history of Greece had been destined to constitute a compendium of all history, these various forms of government were now allowed a gradual development, now brought into sudden antagonism, and now suffered to change into each other, or to combine their several elements in the most various proportions. Not only was Greece providentially built up into a University in which all nations were to be trained in scientific lore, and an Academy in which the Arts were to find a perpetual asylum, but it became also a theatre in which human society rehearsed all its parts, and a treasure-house in which History was to preserve its archives and store its lessons. To be familiar with the annals of Greece is to understand the philosophy of history. Compared with it the records of most other communities are but a chronicle of accidents. In it is contained essentially the inner history of each. On

that history we look down as on a map; and it becomes intelligible to us because it lies in a narrow limit, and is illuminated by a wide and steady light. All that can take place intellectually or morally on the globe is but an expansion of the struggles that may take place in a single breast. The history of a man is the history of a race: the history of a race is the history of a world: but in proportion as the horizon is widened, our eyes are bewildered, and clouds obscure the scene. The history of human society, epitomised in that of Greece, is instructive to us because it is condensed, and because in shaking off the sophisms of prolixity and the perplexities of detail, it stands before us idealised. Greece, considered politically and morally, is like the tent in the eastern tale, which, when folded, could be carried on a man's shoulder, and, when opened, could shelter an army.

Nor were the rival States of Greece without a true bond of union, though not of political union. In confederations the great problem is commonly supposed to be that of combining

municipal independence with political unity. It is not wonderful that so delicate an experiment should seldom have been successfully made. Such, assuredly, was not the character of Hellenic unity; for the Amphictyonic Council, whatever its pretensions may have been, had seldom the power of composing the differences of rival States and averting war. Greece was neither a "confederate State" nor a confederation of States. It was an associated system, or rather family of States, each of them not only municipally but politically independent, yet revolving, all of them, round the common focal points of religion and ethical sentiment. Had those States been compressed into a real political unity, they would as completely have lost their distinctive social characters as the islands of the Cyclades would have lost their various and beautiful shapes if squeezed into a single island —they would as utterly have lost their peculiar moral energies as the plates of a Voltaic battery would lose their electric power if fused into a common mass. The connecting bond

among the Greek States, which were one if considered with reference to the rest of the world, and wholly independent if considered with reference to each other, was moral and imaginative, and neither material nor political. A common race had founded that union, a common language sustained, and common recollections cemented it. The Grecian States were clustered into a single system by virtue of the common ideas that animated them, as the various countries of Europe were once constituted into a whole by that which they held in common—the Christian religion—the Roman law—and the institute of chivalry. Their centre of union was not a fixed spot, but one that changed with every change of purpose. Now it was found in the Delphic shrine, the meeting point of the disturbed; now at Eleusis, where pilgrims from every land were initiated; now in the plain of Elis, where all Greece contended in friendly rivalship, from the hour that the full moon, shining upon the marble roof of the Olympian Temple had proclaimed a universal truce;—

now amid the Nemean or the Isthmian concourse, or in the Temple of Bacchus at Athens, when Sophocles or Æschylus struck once more the chord left vibrating by the hand of Homer, and reminded the spectators from every region that a united Hellas had once fought and triumphed on the Asian coasts.

If, in place of this moral, a material unity had been substituted, and Greece had been but one nation, like Italy under the Romans, how completely it would have lost its peculiar greatness! Without the emulation of States, each of which ran for the prize which but one could receive at a time, and the love of glory thus produced, it is probable that its extraordinary Intellect would never have been roused. A united Greece would commonly have been safe from foreign aggression: it must, therefore, have devoted itself wholly to the arts of peace, and availing itself to the full of those singular commercial advantages which its indented coasts and its geographical position bestowed, would probably have become a larger Tyre; or like its

own least glorious city, Corinth, it would have drowned all that was noblest among its attributes in an alternation of industrialism and of luxury. Its chief divinities would have been Vulcan and Venus; but their marriage is as far from being applauded on earth as in heaven. If, on the other hand, inflamed by its power, Greece had addicted itself to aggressive wars, it could but have founded one of those vulgar empires, of which the world has seen enough, and ended—for in such triumphs the reaction is equal to the action—in partially sharing the barbarism of the boundless tracts it had conquered. Unquestionably, if a united Hellas had turned its arms in time to the West, it would have founded a western empire in its maturity, as it founded an eastern in its decline:—the spears of its invincible phalanx would have been reflected in the Danube and the Rhine, as well as in the Granicus, and the Roman legion might never have been heard of. Had the Greeks, however, built up such an empire, it would have been in place of the more glorious dominion

which it was given to them alone to found. Their imperial power also would not have been as enduring or as beneficial as that of the Romans; for they had neither the same constancy in their principles of rule, nor the same reverence for law.

The small size of the Greek States is a matter of paramount importance, though one often overlooked, when their example is cited with respect to forms of government, and in vindication of the Republican principle. It is chiefly where a large country is concerned that the principle of order needs for its support that gradation of ranks of which monarchy is the natural apex. Where the territory is so narrow and the population so small that every man is, as it were, before the eye of the public, there, on the other hand, we may expect most often to meet with that diffusion of public principle and sense of duty which are the first requisites in republics. In a large and populous nation every man has the benefit or the temptations of an incognito. In a small country, public

matters come home to the whole community, and whoever discharges public functions is obliged to walk in the light. Greece is often cited as a precedent in favour of democratic institutions. Many of the Greek republics were far enough from being democratic: let us however take the case of Athens, whose institutions were pre-eminently of a popular character. In one sense Athens was a democracy, but hardly in the modern sense. The Athenian freemen were few in comparison of those inhabitants of Attica who had no political privileges whatever. To the latter class belonged some ten thousand strangers and about four hundred thousand slaves. Among these the Athenian citizens ranged, a small and select body; how small we may imagine when we recollect that Attica was about the size of an English county, that half of it consisted of barren mountain, and the rest of soil by no means fertile. In the enjoyment of ample leisure, (the hard work of the country being performed by their slaves,) the small minority

received the highest intellectual culture then existing, from literature, from the fine arts, from social intercourse, and from the drama. To such a height was mental refinement carried among them, that the tragedies and the orations listened to by what we call the Athenian populace, are too severe and stately wholly to please the literary classes in modern society. Athens might as justly be called an academy as a nation, and the Athenian government was as far from being a democracy as an aristocracy in the modern sense of the word. Where the territory is small, where every man is educated and redeemed from servile labour, and where external relations are such as to cause at once emulation and anxiety, there upon each citizen his country has set her seal, and he may fitly be entrusted with the charge of her safety.

About five o'clock in the evening I was suddenly roused from my reveries by a loud exclamation from my servant, who clasped his hands in dismay, and wrung them in wrath, crying out, "Santa Maria! ecco, per Bacco, il

vapore!" I turned, and saw above a green headland, which divided us from the harbour of Patras, the black standard of the Austrian steamer floating far behind her as she steamed out of port. I could hardly believe my eyes: but, on landing, I found that it was indeed the Austrian packet and no other, which (punctual for once to its time, as if from a spirit of contradiction) had left Patras just as I reached it. Not a little disconcerted was I at the accident; and, indeed, I have often asked myself since how I could have been so blinded by a traveller's superstitious devotion to his own arrangements, as to have regretted the prospect of another fortnight spent in Greece. I had not, however, much difficulty in reconciling myself to my lot, nor did I sleep the worse from having a bed to recline upon. Within a few days an English steamer called at Patras, on its way to the Ionian Islands: in it I took my passage, and waited at Corfu for the arrival of the boat bound for Ancona.

CHAPTER IV.

VOYAGE TO CONSTANTINOPLE.

Sail to Syra—A Strange Accident—The Lazaretto of Syra—Aspect of the City by Night—The Island of Syra—Views of the Egean—Sail to Smyrna—Accident by Sea—A Boat run over—Loss of an Anchor—Greek Sailors saved—The Bay of Smyrna—The City—Spot of St. Polycarp's Martyrdom—Views from the Hills of Smyrna—Its Burial-Grounds—Bazaar—Mosques—French and Greek Diplomacy—Plain of Troy—The Dardanelles—Sestos—The Sea of Marmora—A Turkish Woman and her Children.

HAVING given you, without interruption, an account of my rambles in Greece, I proceed to relate the incidents of my excursion to Constantinople. Shortly after my excursion to Marathon, I resolved to defer all further expeditions in Greece until the season was more advanced, and availed myself of the interval to visit Constantinople. I took my berth in a French man-of-war steamer, the "Mentor" by name, and left the Peireus with every prospect of a prosperous voyage. The ship was large, clean, and in all respects orderly; and I could not help contrast-

ing it favourably with the Austrian steamers, of which I had seen more than enough. Pride, however, will have a fall. The second day, we had passed several islands, among others Zea and Thermia, and were rapidly approaching Syra when we went down to dinner. A little before the end of our meal, the captain, to our no small astonishment, sent us word that we must make haste, as the boat was waiting to land us on the island! It was in vain that every one who had taken his place for Constantinople produced his ticket, and declared that he had no curiosity to see Syra. Nothing further could we make out than that the vessel we were in was not going to Constantinople—that the captain had taken us to Syra for our own good —that our fares to Constantinople had been accepted out of deference to general principles —that during the night we were to be lodged like princes in the Lazaretto — and that, the next morning, the vessel, which was really proceeding to Constantinople, would have the honour of waiting on us, and would

be but too happy to take us to the end of our voyage.

Where there is no alternative, a man's deliberations need not cost him much time. Gloomily and silently we descended the ship's side—a motley, many-coloured company—and seated ourselves in the little boat. The captain stood at the side of the ship, took off his hat, smiled, and made us a short speech, apparently very obliging, and particularly satisfactory to himself; but the splashing of the oars drowned his parting words. What they were, therefore, I know not; but mine, if I had expressed my thoughts, would have been—"Never again will I be such a very youthful Telemachus as to cast my lot with a 'Mentor' more perfidious than Circe." Before we had done ruminating dark fancies, and chewing out the luxury of a grievance, we discovered that those who complain about trifles are not left long without real cause for complaint. Close to the shore, where our boat grated against the sand, were ranged a dozen dens (for they were not good enough to be

called hovels), built of pebbles and mud. "There live the fishermen of Syra," I remarked: "poor men, I suppose they are out just now providing our supper." "On the contrary," replied the steersman, "there you must live yourselves for a little time: but, courage! you will be as comfortable as possible: the sea never comes in." Thinking ourselves in a strange dream, we landed, and bent low enough to look into one of these kennels, in which there was neither floor nor ceiling, nor yet chair or table. There it stood—four walls—an abode in the abstract—no particular house—a place stripped of impertinences, and free from conventionalities. In consternation we recoiled, fully resolved to get on board the boat again, and insist on being received in the ship. Already, however, the sailors had pushed off at the command of their steersman, who took his cigar out of his mouth, and remarked that the lazaretto seemed faulty from what it lacked rather than from what it possessed!

Three of these dens being vacant at the time

of our arrival, I was able to select one, in which I had but two companions. They stuck a tallow candle against the earthen wall, resolved that if the fleas devoured them before morning, at least they would "perish in the light." Down they lay, contented, low-minded Greeks, without self-respect enough to consider themselves as men aggrieved, and were asleep in a few minutes. I found it less easy to reconcile myself to my lot, but hit upon an expedient not sufficiently appreciated, that of conquering vexation with fatigue. Accordingly, leaving my companions to their dreams, I sallied forth, and walked for hours up and down beside the still and gleaming sea. I have seldom seen a more picturesque spectacle than the town of Syra presented on that occasion. It is placed on a crescent-hill, which rises from the water-side, just opposite the little island on which the lazaretto stands. The whole of this crescent, and also a steep mound on its summit, is covered with houses ranged one above another, stage beyond stage, like the steps of an amphitheatre. In the

town there is not one single shutter, the consequence of which was that nearly every light was visible from our prison. The illumination was reflected in the water, and could not easily be exceeded in brilliancy. At an early hour in the morning weariness crept over me, and I retired to rest. I was awaked by the joyful acclamations of my fellow-sufferers, who had already discovered the arrival of the second French steam-boat. In a few minutes we had tumbled our luggage into a boat, each man rushing to the landing-place with a portmanteau on his shoulder, and rowed along side. At the bulwarks stood the captain and several officers, all very like each other, and all very ugly, smiling, nodding, and bowing to us, and whispering to each other. Up rose every man in our boat, which swayed about till I thought it would have upset—Greek, Turk, Jew, and Armenian, and chattered vociferously for about three minutes, each in his own language, making a confusion of tongues in which not one word was intelligible. The captain

listened with much politeness and answered, when the hubbub had subsided, "Mais, messieurs, certainement!" Distrusting so general an assent, I got up in my turn, and stated our case to him, requesting him to take us on to Constantinople. "Impossible," was his reply. We were in quarantine, and so should he be if he meddled with us. "But you are going to Constantinople, the city of the plague." "No matter," was his reply. "The ship which had brought us thus far came from Alexandria: the plague at Alexandria differed from that at Constantinople, and far exceeded it in virulence." "But we had been given tickets to Constantinople." "No matter; it must be confessed that it was an imprudence to have given them." I made one more desperate effort in an oration full of sublimity and pathos, insisting on the law of nations, the honour of the French flag, insult to the English nation, and the rights of man;—in the midst of which the vessel steamed off, splashing us all over with the spray from her paddles, the captain

and his officers taking off their hats, shrugging their shoulders, and lifting up their eyebrows into arches steeper than the "Bridge of sighs" or the "Pons asinorum." The last words which I caught were "pauvres diables," from the captain, and "enfin c'est égal" from the officer next him. Nothing remained but to row back to the lazaretto, which accordingly we did, the Greeks tossing back their heads with scornful laughter, the Armenians and Jews gesticulating with rage, while a solemn Turk who said nothing, evidently thought the more, twisting his beard in his hand, glancing after the ship with lurid eyes, and no doubt wishing for a sword!

On returning to the lazaretto, the first thing we discovered was that, during our brief absence, a hundred and fifty pilgrims, on their way to a saintly shrine in a neighbouring island, had taken possession of our dens. There we stood, a group for a painter, with our portmanteaus on our shoulders, our bags in our hands, bitter indignation swelling in our hearts, and our eyes

fixed in jealous amazement upon the strangers who had contrived to rob us of our hitherto detested homes. In reply to our enquiries and reproaches, the authorities told us that there was still one small room unoccupied at the top of the lazaretto, into which we might pack ourselves if we pleased; on the other hand, we were equally free, if we preferred it, to squeeze ourselves into our old kennels. We cast another despairing glance at their new occupants, who were crammed so tightly together that a cat or a dog could hardly have found room among them; nor would a cat which preserved a remnant of self-respect have made the attempt. These pilgrims were, most of them, beggars, and apparently had not been washed since the battle of Navarinó, if indeed they had ever been washed in their lives. There could be little doubt that they were covered with vermin of every sort; and in the East there are nine different kinds of bugs alone. A brief consultation was quite sufficient to determine us; and we desired the guardians to place us where they

pleased, provided they removed us from the present company. We were marshalled accordingly to our upper chamber. Having taken possession of it, and deposited our luggage on the floor, we sallied forth again to an open court, where we passed the day, meditating on the interesting chances which befal travellers, and the knowledge of the world which they are sure to pick up on their way.

Late in the evening it grew cold, and I was obliged to take refuge within the walls of our dungeon. I found my companions already there, squatting tailor-wise, each man upon that carpet with which the eastern traveller is generally provided. All were talking at once, and each in a different language, laughing and telling stories, until my brain went round like the brain of a dancing Dervise. As it grew later, and the cold increased, each of them pulled up the four corners of his carpet and knotted them over his shoulders, nothing remaining outside the pyramid thus formed except his head and red night-cap. A strange spectacle they presented, squatting

there like so many wretches whom an Evil Genius of Africa had immersed in leathern bottles and left for a season. Every moment their volubility seemed to wax fiercer, and I had given over all hopes of sleep, feeling indeed as much stunned as if I had been hanged by the heels from the topmost story of the Tower of Babel, when all at once there came a pause ;—the imprisoned spirits wavered in their circle, lay down, or rather tumbled over, with one accord, and in another moment were snoring. There was but one exception, an Armenian merchant, who continued for more than two hours to recount a series of stories for his own amusement, accompanying them with furious gesticulations. He also, however, at last ceased,—brought to a stand-still in a moment, like a child's top when it has hit against the wall,—upset and joined the rest of the sleepers.

The next day was fortunately the last of our quarantine, and thenceforward we were to enjoy the freedom of the island. Great was our alarm, however, on descending into the court,

lest any of the more recently arrived travellers should touch us, as such an accident (a thing of frequent occurrence) would have consigned us to another imprisonment of fourteen days. So nervous did this prospect make me, that long after I was set free, I could not help, while walking about Syra, instinctively holding forth my stick between me and any one who approached very near. I had still to wait five days for the arrival of another packet. With the assistance of the English Consul I succeeded in making out the Secretary of the French packet office, and insisted on receiving a clearer explanation than I had yet been favoured with of the singular fact that although I had taken my place in a steamer bound for Constantinople, that vessel had notwithstanding proceeded to Alexandria instead, dropping me at Syra. Mr. Secretary, in reply, commenced a long harangue, dividing the subject into different heads, each of which he counted on his fingers as he proceeded. Three of these heads he had already disposed of, when, perceiving that he

had ten fingers at his command, and that the question would therefore necessarily divide itself into ten heads, I interposed, stating that he had convinced me already, and that I would give him no further trouble, except to refund the money I had paid. This demand astonished him very much, shocked him not a little, and would have pained him yet more had he not obligingly attributed it to my ignorance of the world and of business. Here, however, I was resolute; and after a tremendous discussion, during which he snatched off his spectacles and put them on again more than a dozen times, I confuted him in argument, and he repaid me my money, with the exception of the fare as far as Syra, assuring me, however, to the last, that he did so out of politeness, not out of justice, "casualties being," as he remarked, "part of the order of nature."

At Syra I found a tolerably good inn—good enough at least it proved for me, inasmuch as, spending the whole day in the open air, I was but little dependent for comfort on its accom-

modations. From morning till night I wandered about the steep and rocky hills; the whole island, I think, not containing a single plain, or even level road. Syra is too bleak and barren to be beautiful, nor is the scale sufficient to impart to its scenery a character of grandeur; it is, however, in a high degree, picturesque. It consists of many successive rough, lofty, and craggy ridges, sprinkled at wide intervals with trees, chiefly ilex and olive, and divided from each other by streams that breathe verdure over the base of the narrow glens through which they glide, and refresh the gardens with which, as well as with wooden cottages, their banks are bordered. Between these tawny ridges open out in all directions magnificent sea-views, comprehending, each of them, a cluster of the Egean isles, which lie, like so many transformed sea-nymphs, basking in the brightest of all suns, and bathing in the bluest of all waters. Among these islands are Delos, Paros, Antiparos, and the Bacchic Naxos. Delightful it would have been to have explored them, had that been

practicable ; nor was it possible without interest to gaze on them from afar—to see the sun ascending over the island that gave Latona rest, and to watch the remote sea around Naxos tinged with the grape-like purple of evening. From rock to rock I clomb, seeking ever for a better point of view from which to contemplate objects, the mere names of which are sufficient to call up fair images before the eyes. Keeping ever on the heights, I seldom passed near a human being, though I sometimes observed the islanders gazing from the glen below at the unwonted stranger. I often lost my way, and generally returned late, to the discontent of the cook, a little bright-eyed man with a paper cap on his head, an enthusiast about his art, who insisted on attending me at dinner, and pointing out in what point of view each dish was to be considered, although I did not understand a syllable he said, and answered him, perhaps too briefly, in English. The five days of expectation rolled pleasantly away ; and though I did not visit Syra by my own good will, yet I left it

with what a traveller calls regret—not, I fear, a very deep sentiment.

From Syra to Smyrna is not a very considerable distance; and yet we contrived to meet two accidents on our way thither, the former of which turned out more formidable to others than to ourselves. It was late in the evening when we approached the coast of Asia, and light there was little or none. Most of those who had been pacing the deck all day had retired to rest—the young ladies to dream of the Bazaar at Constantinople, and the men, let us hope, of those whose unsteady steps they had lately been staying. The sea was quite still, and we rushed through it with a speed which, on a dark night, sometimes makes one think how far from desirable it would be to encounter another vessel advancing with the same velocity, but in an opposite direction. The ocean, however, is a wide road, on which there is room enough for two vessels to pass each other; and that would be a strange coincidence which brought them to the same spot at the same moment. Such were

my thoughts, as, lying on the deck, I turned on my side to court sleep once more; when suddenly I heard a shout from the sailors in the fore part of the vessel. In a moment I was among them; but before I had time to see anything, I heard a loud crash, followed by a louder cry; and saw, in a moment more, the mast and white sails of a vessel which we had run over, clinging—a lamentable spectacle—to our bows and rigging. In a few minutes we had lowered a couple of boats, in the hope of picking up the wrecked crew. All around us the sea was covered with the stores the luckless vessel had carried, consisting chiefly of lemons and oranges, as well as with oars and spars. The next ten minutes were a time of deep suspense; but at the end of it our boats returned with three Greek sailors, all whom they had been able to find. Whether the whole of the crew had been saved, or what proportion might have been lost, we knew not; and we clustered, with many questions and infinite confusion, around the three Greek sailors, who,

having given themselves a good shake, each, like a water-dog, stood among us the only unmoved people in the group. In reply to our questions, the sole answer we received consisted of the words, τρις ανθροπες, the penultimate syllable of the latter word being pronounced short; while, in illustration of their meaning, each of our informants held up three fingers of his right hand. From this answer we rightly inferred that their crew had consisted of but three men, all of whom had providentially been saved.

On further inquiry, it turned out that the unfortunate vessel we had run over was a trading boat, bound from Smyrna to some other city on the coast of Asia Minor, with a cargo of figs, lemons, groceries, and spices. The wind having died away, the sailors had gone to sleep, and were awaked, for the first time, by finding themselves in the water. They immediately struck out, and swam round and round like so many frogs, taking care not to separate from each other, and concluding that whoever

had upset their boat would, as a matter of course, return to "make enquiries." Not the least disconcerted did they seem by the accident; and, apparently, they had seen enough of the world to know, like my friend the secretary of the steamboat office, "that casualties are part of the order of nature." Considering the degree of nervous agitation and distress which we, who belong to the more "civilised" part of the world, experience, on very slight occasions, such as missing a railway train, their entire self-possession and almost entire indifference were worthy of notice. They were going to lie down on the deck again, and compose themselves to sleep, when the captain insisted on their changing their clothes, lending them three cloth suits of his own, while theirs were placed near the fire to dry. This arrangement effected, our unexpected visitors went to bed, and we followed their example; though, as accidents are said never to come alone, I had a strong impression that our slumbers would not remain unbroken.

And even so it happened. After a few hours' sleep I was awaked by a loud commotion on deck; men rushing in every direction, and clamouring after a fashion which probably would not be tolerated on board an English man-of-war during a wreck. It was that cold dreary hour of grey dawn which precedes sunrise; but there was light enough for me to see that, just at the entrance of the bay of Smyrna, we had got too near the shore, and that, although there were no rocks near us, there were abundance of shoals, from which it is not easy to extricate a ship that has run aground. We saved ourselves from that misfortune by flinging out an anchor just in time; but when, on getting the vessel round, we endeavoured to raise that anchor, we found that this was no easy matter. An English ship, which lay rocking in the shadow hard by, sent off a boat to our assistance: the joint exertions, however, of our own crew and of our friends proved ineffectual; and after losing an hour we were obliged to proceed upon our way, leaving

our new allies to continue their efforts unaided.

Soon after sunrise our whole ship's crew had appeared on deck, and among them the three Greeks, whose acquaintance we had so unceremoniously made during the night. They had discovered on board a passenger who was able to speak both Greek and French, and with his aid, as an interpreter, they came to the captain and demanded that he should reimburse them for the property they had lost. This, at first, he stoutly refused to do, asserting that the fault had been entirely on their side; that they had no right to have gone to sleep on the water; that lying, as they did, right in his way, they might have done him the most serious damage, and would have done it, but for the accident of their boat being so much smaller than his; and that, even as matters had turned out, they had occasioned him much delay, trouble, and agitation. To this harangue the Greeks listened with immoveable tranquillity, and with the countenances of men who had heard just what

they expected to hear: then, brightening up with a sudden vivacity, they enquired of him, not even waiting for an interpretation of his speech, whether a steam-boat was not bound to carry a lantern on her mast. This question, of course, he could not answer, otherwise than in the affirmative, and, accordingly, he asserted that he had carried one. The Greeks had, however, shortly after coming on board, heard an officer reprove a sailor for having neglected to light the lantern, and had guessed his meaning by his gesticulations. Thus far they were able to make their cause good, and the captain was obliged to lower his tone and to expostulate with them on their ingratitude to a man who had saved their lives; affirming that he had spent twenty years chiefly in endeavouring to befriend the Greeks, and that he had met nothing but ingratitude in return. Our guests, however, insisted on their rights, and the captain, compelled to negotiate, told them that it would be a great scandal if friends were to quarrel about a trifle—that when he landed at Smyrna he

would send for the French Consul, refer the matter to him, and abide by his decision.

The Greeks consulted for a few moments on the subject in their own language, laughed, and said they would allow him to settle the matter in whatever way he thought just. Their acquiescence surprised me, as I expected little from the proposed arbitration. My suspicions were confirmed when I heard one officer say to another, "Just as if our Consul would decide against his nation;" to which the other replied, "Beside, the captain will not give him the trouble of coming." "What," said I to myself, "can a Greek be outwitted by a Frenchman?" It was not till our departure from Smyrna that I was undeceived. Our astute captain had informed his shipwrecked guests that he would not have time to see the Consul till an hour before getting under way in the afternoon. They agreed after a little murmuring to return at a specified time, and landed with the rest of us, still wearing the captain's clothes, in order, as they stated, to look out for another boat. When the hour for our

departure came, however, our friends were no where to be found; and all search for them proved as vain as a search for the old moons or the snow of last year would have been. Great was the horror of our captain as the truth dawned upon him; great his indignation when there was no longer room for doubt. Furiously did he pace up and down the deck; many a wrathful glance did he cast at the shore, before he admitted that the game was up, and exclaimed "In fine they have deceived me! wretches, ingrates! Three suits of clothes! my best or among my best—worth their paltry cargo thrice told,—lemons, indeed! figs! impostors that they are; without doubt they laugh at us! ah, Greeks, Greeks!" Notwithstanding, neither had the French Consul ever set his foot on deck. Truly it was diamond cut diamond between them; but "thrice blest Hermes" smiled upon his sons, and glanced obliquely on the stranger.

The bay of Smyrna is eminently noble in character, superior, I think, to any of the Italian bays, though hardly equalling in variety and

loveliness several of the Grecian. Sailing in that bay and in its neighbourhood I was much struck by the deep green of the mountains, which contrasts strongly with the lavender-colour, predominant in Attica. The scenery around Smyrna is on a broader and grander scale than that which I had lately seen, its hills being wider though not higher, while the ample valleys between them are characterised at once by vastness and luxuriance. Beyond the city, in a direction opposite to that in which the sea lies, rises a noble amphitheatre of broad, green hills, on which the people point out a spot which, as they affirm, was the site of a church built by St. John, and another, asserted to be the place of St. Polycarp's martyrdom. Such lore is, of course, somewhat apocryphal; but in the region where once flourished one of the Seven Churches of Asia, we are more disposed to accept such legends on insufficient evidence, than to scrutinise them closely. I visited a venerable castle built by the Genoese, which crowns the summit of one of the highest hills, and commands such

a view of sea and mountain as few spots on the earth can display. Standing on that elevated ground, I could not determine which was to be preferred, the inland prospect with its rich, wide valleys, its winding rivers, its plane-trees, and dusky cypress-groves, or the bay with its green and broad-based mountains, its beaming sea, and its multitudinous shipping. To that bay an additional interest was given by the presence of the English and French fleets which lay in a crescent on its ample plain, heaving slowly in the sunshine while at anchor, and straining their cables—a suggestive image of restrained yet expectant ambition.

The picturesque effect of Smyrna is much enhanced by its numerous and magnificent burial-places, which are sufficient in themselves to convince a reflective mind that the East by no means labours under that comparative barbarism which the self-sufficiency of the West has long attributed to it. Where the dead are remembered, there the heart and the moral sense are alive; nor can man there be subjected

to that true barbarism which, however it may be tricked out and made specious, consists in nothing more than in a dependence on the senses and the present hour, and an alienation from all sad and solemn thoughts. The effect of those vast black forests is inexpressibly grand, and the more so because they commonly range over elevated ground, and occupy a large proportion of the landscape. Over every grave a cypress is planted; standing, therefore, within about six feet of each other, each gathering an added darkness from its neighbour's shadow, they cloud the earth with a sombre weight of shade, and seem to turn night into day. In the cities of the dead which they consecrate nature herself is obliged to wear mourning.

The streets of Smyrna are narrow, dirty, and dark: the bazaar, on the other hand, is as brilliant and as fascinating as a cavern of jewels described in a fairy tale. It consists of a labyrinth of alleys, roofed with planks which nearly join each other, but which are yet sufficiently far apart to let in streaks of sunshine

that bar the pavement as with golden ingots, and shoot a radiance into the duskiest recesses of the gorgeous shops at each side. The dark magnificence of these shops imparts to the bazaar that peculiar richness which characterises Eastern pageantry. The goods of each, instead of being locked up in presses, or ranged along the retiring depth of the building, are all brought to the front, and exhibited there in the most tasteful combination. At one time you walk for a hundred yards through a space glowing like an autumnal orchard from the multitude of crimson and orange slippers suspended at each side, numerous enough, one might fancy, to have shod the army of Xerxes. At another you pass through alleys lined with Cashmere shawls and Persian carpets, and sumptuous as an Oriental saloon. A little further on you come to a region glittering with jewellery, perfumery, and sweetmeats. The traveller, however, who allows his eye to be too much entranced by these wonders, is likely to be rudely awakened, and may think himself

well off if he escapes being knocked down by a train of camels, pacing forward, softly and deliberately, one by one, with shaggy necks and level heads, like beasts in a state of somnambulism. The burthens which they carry are frequently wide enough to sweep the booths at each side; so that the best chance of not being thrown down, if one cannot retreat into a shop, would seem at first to consist in stooping low enough to let them pass over one's head.

The mosques of Smyrna must much disappoint any one who has formed high expectations of them. I hardly know any religious buildings the architecture of which appears more entirely uninspired. The traveller finds no difficulty in gaining admittance on complying with the simple condition of taking off his shoes, a mark of respect which will seem to him very superfluous as soon as he has entered. The interior is a vast saloon, for the most part square, and always a rectangle, the roof of which is commonly supported on large and shapeless pillars. Buildings

more entirely destitute, not only of architectural symbolism, but of expression, it would be difficult to imagine: and bare as they are, they make that bareness yet more offensive from the paltry ornaments with which they endeavour to enliven it, those ornaments consisting chiefly in countless little lamps and ostrich eggs suspended from the ceiling. Everything, however, no matter how insipid, has yet something characteristic about it; and the baldness of these mosques corresponds aptly enough with the flat and dreary rationalism of a religion which differs but little from the Unitarianism of the West (renouncing as it does all mysterious dogmatic Faith, all sacramental worship, and all sacerdotal ministrations) except in the strictness with which it enforces cleanliness, the zeal with which it once inspired the loyal servants of its prophet, and its retention of that polygamy so long tolerated in the East.

Further accident we encountered none on our way to the "Golden Horn." On reaching the mouth of the bay we found that the crew of

the English vessel had toiled the greater part of the day to recover our lost anchor, and that their perseverance had not been unavailing. Poor fellows! they expected a reward for their pains which they were not destined to receive. Certainly they deserved something "to drink," as they would have called it: but our captain conceived that the loss of three suits of clothes was sufficient for one day. Perhaps he may have remembered them in his will, or sent them from Constantinople a money order on our three run-away Greeks: but it is certain that he took their day's labour on that occasion as a disinterested labour of love, and that consequently we departed amid very grim looks and a scornful silence, instead of hearty cheers. We left behind the island of Scio; and ere long that of Mitylene was on our left hand. On our right lay that shore which the blind minstrel who sings for all time had doubtless often paced—catching perhaps an inspiration from the deep-woven harmonies of the sea—and on which Priam had once reigned among the

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towers, and palaces, and God-built walls of "windy Ilium." Nothing remains to mark the spot which afforded a subject to what may perhaps be called, using the term in its highest sense, the one Epic poem of the world. Simois and Scamander are but feeble streams winding through the wide meadowy plain which drops with a soft descent from its mountain boundary to the waves of the sea. Were they ever more, or was it only to the magnifying influences of the imagination that we owe the wonders of that well-fought field? Let us beware how we doubt that those narrow rivulets were once abounding rivers, lest, taken possession of by the long-fingered and short-sighted demon of scepticism, we should end by doubting whether the Elders of Troy rose up from their seats when the divine beauty of Helen drew nigh, and adopt an opinion with respect to the heroes who fought around its walls as disparaging as that so frequently maintained by old Nestor.

Before many hours we had sailed past the island of Tenedos, and left on the western

horizon, the blue and misty shores of Lemnos, where Vulcan had, in the Hellenic legend, met with what my friend, who commented on the Leucadian promontory and Sappho's leap, would have called "a distressing accident." Ere long we were steering into the Dardanelles, and sailing by the shores which the memory of Hero has consecrated. That torch which the priestess of Venus held out from the tower of Sestos, if remorselessly extinguished as often as she re-lighted it—

> "On that night of stormy water,
> When Love who sent forgot to save
> The young, the beautiful, the brave,
> The lonely hope of Sestos' daughter—"

has been lighted again by successive poets, and tended with a more than common fidelity during the ages which have rolled away since her brief sorrow. After being transmitted from the hands of Virgil and Ovid to those of our Marlow and Chapman, it has been once more, in our own days, lifted up and waved around by those of Leigh Hunt and Thomas Hood. In most of the

legends which have descended to us from antiquity, there is a certain indescribable charm which prevents them from ever growing old. It would not be easy to ascertain in what that charm consists; but when we remember that those stories only have reached us which have proved able to pass through the filter of time, there is the less reason to be surprised at the fact, that a merit thus severely tested should appeal so strongly to our sympathies.

The sea of Marmora received us ere long, and it was then that we felt that we were within the precincts of the capital of the Eastern Empire. We had on board a goodly array of Orientals from all parts of the East, who were far too dignified to take any interest in the objects we passed by. One of these was an interesting being, a Turkish woman unprotected, and probably nearly as much troubled at finding herself thus separated from her wonted seclusion, and divulged to the world, as if she had been a nun. Two children were her sole companions; and in looking after her charge, she did not

always find it easy to keep the veil muffled with its customary closeness about her pale, smooth, and beautifully-shaped face. Her dark and slow eyes stared alarmed disapprobation at the wonders of the deep; while those of her children, equally dark, and almost equally languid, rested quiescent upon whatever trifle chanced to be near them. Not a word did she speak of any European language; but she consoled herself by talking incessantly to her infant, who was so young that, if he understood her better than the rest of the ship's company, he was yet equally unable to make any clear reply. Not far from her sat two little Greek girls, apparently about ten or eleven years old. After casting many a dubious glance toward her, they rose at last, with a common impulse, went to her, and notwithstanding their ignorance of her language, and their detestation of her race and religion, insisted upon taking possession of her eldest child, whom they carried about, without opposition on his part, for the rest of the voyage. The poor mother, "silent as a woman fearing blame,"

resisted stoutly at first, and looked after them uneasily for a long time afterwards; but apparently she reconciled herself to the abduction at last, perceiving perhaps that her child was in safe hands, and remembering, at all events, that nothing could happen to him which had not been decreed from the hour of his birth, nay, from the creation of the world,—two important epochs, no doubt, in her chronology. As for the Greek girls, wherever one went the other went, and whatever one looked at the other looked at also; so that one might have fancied they had but one soul between them, if it had not been for the art with which they alternately supplanted each other in the possession of their captive, whom they carried about with them, up stairs and down stairs, in and out, and all over the ship. Wherever they went, the young Turk went also. They were as inseparably connected as a divinity and his attribute in a mythological print.

CHAPTER V.

CONSTANTINOPLE.

First Appearance of the City as seen from the Water—Intermingling of Architectural and Natural Beauty—Brilliant Colouring of the Scene—Contrast between Constantinople and Venice—Also between Constantinople and the Ancient Cities of Greece—Vast Size of Constantinople and its Suburbs—A Traveller's Disappointment on Landing—Interior of Constantinople—Its Narrow Streets—The Character of Nations illustrated by the Aspect of their Capitals—Prominent Characteristics of Constantinople — Mosques — Baths — Tombs—Tomb of the Sultan Solyman.

I HAD been occupied for some time in the cabin, when a fellow-traveller entered and announced that we were sailing past Constantinople. I hastened at once to the deck, and could hardly at first determine whether what I beheld were indeed a city, or a vision of the imagination. The view of Constantinople from the sea is the most splendid of all the pageants presented to human eye by the metropolitan cities of the earth. The vulgar detail of street and alley is hidden from sight, and you are greeted, instead, by an innumerable company of mosques

minarets, palaces, dome-surmounted baths, and royal tombs, the snowy brilliancy or splendid colouring of which is, in some degree, mitigated by the garden trees that cluster around them, and the cypress forests which skirt the hills, and, here and there, descend into the city. That city is built upon a series of hills; and so intensely is a fair prospect prized by a Turk, that, on every commanding spot, the house of some rich man is placed, with its gilded lattices gleaming through a leafy screen. So large and numerous are the gardens, that the effect is less that of trees scattered amid a city, than of a city built in a forest but partially cleared. This green veil, however, softens rather than obscures the apparition that lurks behind, the vast and countless white domes shining broadly and placidly through it, while the gilded tops of the minarets glitter on high like the flames that hover above the reed-like tapers in Italian cathedrals. Multitudes of houses in Constantinople are painted green, red, or blue—a circumstance that added to the gorgeousness of the

spectacle which met my eye, as well as the fact that spring had already breathed upon the plane-trees and the almonds, which were putting forth abundantly their fresh green leaves, and their blossoms pure as the foam of the sea.

It is, however, the sea which gives its peculiar character to Constantinople as to Venice. In Venice the sea is crowned by the sea-born city, and spreads all around it, as round an island thick-set with palaces and towers. In Constantinople the effect is the opposite. At the point whence Stamboul (the ancient Byzantium), Pera, and Scutari diverge, the sea of Marmora, the Bosphorus, and the wide and winding harbour of the "Golden Horn" meet, forming, as it were, a great lake, round which, as round a central plain, the three-fold city extends, rising, stage above stage, along the slopes of the hills. The effect of this unrivalled position is, that nearly every building of importance is brought at once before the eye, minaret and dome lifting themselves up one above another. In this

respect the contrast is most remarkable between Constantinople and those capitals of the north in which you never see the city itself, but only the street or the square you stand in at the moment, in which public buildings lose almost all their effect from not grouping together, and in which you have no extended effects of colour, or of light and shade.

Equally opposed in character is Constantinople to the ancient capitals of Greece, each of which, with the exception of Delphi and a few other unwarlike cities, was built round some steep and rocky Acropolis from which its citadel looked proudly down. Constantinople has no such Acropolitan centre. If a centre for it were sought, it might, perhaps, best be found in a spot which adds much to the picturesque effect of the scene, though nothing to its dignity—the "Prince's Island," a rock nearly at the entrance of the Bosphorus, just large enough to sustain a mosque, the dome of which peers out from among its cypresses. Beside that island old Dandalo moored his galleys at the capture of

Constantinople by the Franks, July 18, 1203. The dark stream of the Bosphorus rushes past its terraced crags, glad to escape the Scythian blasts it has left behind, and mingles the waters of the Black Sea with the blue and luminous expanse of the sea of Marmora. Far, however, from looking down on the city from this spot, you look up in all directions on its glittering lines as they rise like an amphitheatre, and fling their white reflections on the deep.

To appreciate the extent of Constantinople, it is necessary to bear in mind that, for all purposes of picturesque effect, the various suburban towns which are united with it, though called by different names, yet constitute but a single city. For a length of eight miles that city rises stage above stage from the sea, bending toward the East, before it reaches the "Golden Horn," which winds through its heart for seven miles further, like a wide river, the hills at both sides being crowned with architectural monuments, interspersed with gardens. Nearly at the mouth of the "Golden

Horn" is the entrance to the Bosphorus. It is here that the three cities meet. Stamboul, to the west, projects into the sea of Marmora a walled and secluded promontory covered with the domes, and shaded with the cypress alleys of the Seraglio, just beyond which rise the roofs of St. Sophia. At the opposite, that is, the eastern, side of the "Golden Horn," is situated Pera, the district in which the Christians reside; while at the southern side of the Bosphorus Scutari juts out, richly decked with mosque and minaret, from the sea at its base, to the cypress cemetery with which its upper slopes are darkened. Nor is this all. At each side of the Bosphorus, all the way to the Black Sea, it may be said that one continuous city extends, composed of villages, which in their gradual growth have nearly met, spreading high upon the hills in many places, and following the windings of the glens until they are lost among the forests and thickets of the inland country. From the Black Sea, in fact, to the sea of Marmora, as well as far along its shores, and

along the "Golden Horn," Constantinople and its suburbs extend, constituting altogether a city, the circuit of which (if a wall were built round it) would not be less than sixty miles, and yet every important building in which is seen from the water! There are five cities in Europe of pre-eminent beauty, regarded as architectural scenes in combination with picturesque natural effects—Constantinople, Naples, Venice, Genoa, and Edinburgh. Of these there is none that approaches Constantinople in the vastness and wonderfulness of its aspect when contemplated from the sea.

A considerable delay ensued after we had cast anchor before we were allowed to land, but if it had lasted twice as long, I should not have been tired of gazing at the prospects around me on every side. At last, however, we were allowed to descend into one of the numerous little caiques that came flocking merrily around us, and we rowed to land in the midst of countless sea-birds, which flew past us, only one degree lighter and swifter than our boat. The

moment that we had touched the shore, a Greek, addressing me in Italian, informed me that he was willing to place his services at my disposal as Cicerone, and that he would conduct me without delay to an excellent house, where I should find everything that a traveller can desire. Accordingly I surrendered myself and my luggage to his discretion, and bade him lead the way. For a considerable time I followed him up a steep and winding ascent; then at last stopped to rub my eyes and ask "What is become of the magnificent city on which I gazed just now?" The hero of an eastern tale suddenly deserted by the Genius or Fairy who has built up his enchanted palace, and on whose departure it melts again into the air, does not gaze around him with more dismay than the traveller who exchanges, for the first time, the view of Constantinople from the sea for the spectacle which meets his eye as he wanders through it. The streets are narrow, hilly, and dirty, besides being so rough and ill-paved that it is with difficulty that one walks along them.

The houses are commonly small, and frequently, at once tawdry and half-ruinous; while, if you pass by the residences of the rich, you probably see no more of them than the garden wall. In these respects the streets of Constantinople bear, we may suppose, no small resemblance to the aspect presented by many an European city some centuries ago, when but little regard was paid to cleanliness, to the comforts of the poor, or to the security of those obliged to walk. Before long I found myself established in a sort of lodging-house rather than hotel, kept by an Italian, and took possession of an airy and comfortable room, though one which commanded unfortunately no view of the sea.

Accompanied by my Greek cicerone, I sallied forth without much loss of time, eager to enjoy a nearer view of a city the first sight of which had been so beautiful. He suggested that we should inspect the antiquities,—a proposal which, however, I begged to decline for the present. There can hardly be a greater mistake than that of beginning one's acquaintance with a great

city by an examination of its minuter details. This mode of proceeding, though a very common one, is surely as great a blunder as that committed by readers who allow their attention to be distracted by verbal criticism during their first perusal of a poem. The original impression which we receive of anything great, whether in nature or in art, is of the utmost importance; and it is absolutely lost if we do not endeavour to take in, as a whole, the object which we can afterwards examine with reference to its several parts. The consequence of reversing the order of this process is, that we insensibly grow accustomed to the objects before the eye without having ever seen them collectively; and that, by the time we have mastered their details, that freshness of impression is worn out in the absence of which the characteristic idea of the whole does not dawn upon us. There is always time enough for scrutinising details; but the opportunity of taking in a general impression once forfeited, is not to be recovered or compensated. Accordingly, I told my guide, very much

to his apparent surprise, that I had not come to Constantinople for the sake of seeing anything in particular, and that I only required him to take me an agreeable ride through the city. Eccentricities pass for nothing on the continent if they come from an Englishman. If costly as well as unreasonable in their character, they find their place, of course, in the bill; if not, they hardly excite a remark, the general opinion, in many places, being that all Englishmen are more or less mad, although they are also particularly respectable, honourable, disagreeable persons, who not only retain the power of managing their affairs, but have also no small faculty of making their way in the world—a faculty strengthened by their being commonly too stupid to see difficulties, and often too ignorant to know when they are defeated. My cicerone mounted his horse, telling me that we should keep a good deal on the heights, where the air is freshest, and that he was quite of my opinion with respect to antiquities and curiosities of all sorts.

The inconvenience of dirty, rough, and hilly streets is much less to a horseman than to one who trudges anxiously on, picking his steps as he best may; and the disappointment I had felt on first landing wore off by degrees. Sometimes from the summits of the citied hills, and sometimes looking between them, we commanded noble views of the sea, viewed over a confused but glorious array of towers, domes, and gardens; and whatever was mean in the separate objects, was lost in the grandeur of the whole. The houses, small and inconvenient as many of them are, possess, notwithstanding, many picturesque features, especially a broad, projecting roof, which produces a striking contrast of light and shade. The most insignificant of them have at least escaped that look of neat and pert vulgarity which characterises most of our snug suburban buildings in England. They are without pretension, and seem sufficient to afford shelter during a shower, and during the night, to a people who, severe as is often the winter, might live during many months of the year in the open air. The

greater number of them are built of wood; and during a long succession of years it was accounted a sort of impiety to use stone in constructing a private house; so solid a material being thought appropriate only for religious edifices. One effect of the modest scale of the ordinary dwelling-houses is, that at Constantinople the public buildings show to greater proportionate advantage than in any other European capital, lifting up their heads over multitudes of picturesque roofs huddled together in strange combinations.

The houses of the rich at Constantinople are sumptuous in their internal arrangements; but externally they affect nothing either of grandeur or of permanence. Half-screened by their lofty garden walls and by the trees that embower them, they might almost escape attention; and no doubt to escape attention is no small recommendation in a country where to exhibit wealth is to tempt rapacity. The external aspect of Constantinople is thus a necessary result of its social condition, and of the

Ottoman institutions. The character of every nation indeed is singularly illustrated by the outward appearance of its metropolis, the most marked features of which constitute, as it were, so many phrenological developments, not difficult of interpretation if scanned by an observant eye. What are the most marked characteristics of Rome? Churches, Obelisks, Galleries of Art, and (among ruins) the Coliseum, the Arches of Triumph, and the pillars on which once stood the Imperial statues now supplanted by those of the Apostles. In these buildings the triple character of the Papal metropolis, sacerdotal, artistic, and imperial, stands forth exhibited in outward types; and in observing the monuments of Rome you become insensibly initiated into its history, and the structure of its society. In the other cities of Italy the palaces of the nobility, sometimes vast and gloomy, sometimes enriched with all the adornments of art, but almost invariably built of solid marble, remind you of that great hereditary aristocracy which inherited rule, or of those

merchant princes, the founders of families which during centuries contended for sway. In Paris neither the palaces of the once-worshipped Monarchy, nor yet those military hospitals and trophies of conquest which embody the martial spirit of a nation devoted to fame, can prevent the eye of the stranger, or of the native, from wandering to those glittering temples of gaiety and sensual pleasure, the innumerable and magnificent cafés and restaurants, with their marble pillars, their mirrored walls, and their vaulted roofs of blue and gold. London, in its wilderness of brick, is a world rather than a city. A few considerable and solid buildings, lost however in the plebeian mass, represent scientific institutions, flourishing trades, or political associations; and two edifices rising high above the rest, St. Paul's and the Parliament House, impersonate Church and State. But the city at large, with its convenient straight streets, its houses of equal height, and one monotonous colour, its smoky atmosphere, its plain proprieties, its parks and

squares, and neat churches, exhibits the outward features of a nation devoted to commerce, to freedom, to the activities of life, to peaceful progress, to modern traditions as the guard of undefined rights, and to ancient usages, so far as these are able, without limiting private liberty, to impart to quiet respectability a harmless and interesting tinge of the venerable.

The outward aspect of Constantinople is equally true to its character and history. Where no hereditary greatness was suffered to exist, except in the royal line, no architectural monuments of great families remain. No one has built for posterity, because no one could trust to the future. The rich have spent their wealth on luxurious carpets and rich divans, not on marble halls, because they knew that before the latter had been completed the bowstring might be their portion. At one moment a man is a slave, and the next he is a Grand Vizier: again the wheel of fortune goes round, and he is an exile. Under these circumstances men snatch at the enjoyment of the moment; but

they think little of the past, and build little on the future. If they have enterprise, and if the oppression under which they suffer be the tyranny of caprice and individual rapacity (which each man hopes to escape), not the inevitable tyranny of rapacious laws, individuals will still accumulate wealth, but they will bequeath no monuments.

In all respects the external features of Constantinople are characteristic of an empire founded on a Faith, and of a people gravely devoted to pleasure, and yet addicted also to meditation, and blindly submissive to fate. The three ideas which they express are, Religion, Enjoyment, and Death. The first is represented by the mosques and minarets, which tower above everything else; the second by the ample baths and beautiful fountains, with their projecting roofs, Moorish panel-works, and gilded lattices, within which the element which, in Greece and Italy, was ever taught to fling up its radiance into the sun, is jealously guarded, like a beauty of the Seraglio. The idea of death confronts

you wherever you move through this paradise of the senses, not only in the cemeteries which swathe the sides of the hills with darkness, but in many a lofty and dome-surmounted tomb, in which a Sultan, still regarded as the father of his people, receives in death the filial veneration of his subjects. The royal tombs thus scattered throughout the city, and intrusted, as it were, to the reverence of all who look up to the Commander of the Faithful, produce an incomparably more impressive effect than could possibly result from a single royal cemetery, or a funeral chapel in connection with one of the palaces.

The first of these tombs which I saw took me by surprise. Not knowing what it was, I inquired of my guide concerning its destination. "Go near to it," he said, "and you will discover." It was a hexagonal building of white marble, surrounded by a projecting arcade of pillars, surmounted by a dome, its base partially wreathed by white lilies, which forced their way up through its foundations, and shaded by a

rifted plane-tree which flung the shadow of its waving branches on the walls and golden lattices. Approaching the latter, and looking through them, I beheld beneath a vaulted and gilded roof, and, resting on a rich carpet, a coffin placed on a stately bier, slanting upward toward the head, and supporting, at the upper end, a white turban and a plume of sable feathers. At each side were ranged other coffins, smaller, but of various sizes, and without turbans or plumes, on which a few beams, struggling through the narrow and arched windows immediately under the roof, and half lost in the thick walls, fell with a feeble lustre. A circle of lamps were suspended above them, and in front of the coffins stood five or six lofty tapers, about twelve feet high, on golden pedestals. Within, all was stilness and voluptuous gloom: without, the softness of the air and brightness of the sunshine derived an additional charm from the cooing of the doves in the plane-tree and on the roof of the building. "It is the Sultan Solyman," said my guide. "In the large coffin beside him lies

Roxalana, his wife. The small coffins contain some of his children, whom he put to death." "And why did he put them to death?" I asked. "Oh, he thought they might become dangerous," was the reply. There they repose together, the parent and the murdered children, in peaceful reunion. Probably those children thought there was as little to be surprised at in their fate as my cicerone did. A belief in fatalism reconciles men to all things. A real belief in Providence would do as much to tranquillise, without interfering with freedom of action.

CHAPTER VI.

CONSTANTINOPLE.

General Aspect of the City and its Inhabitants—Veiled Women—Carriages Drawn by Oxen—The Bazaar—Its Armoury—Method of Dealing—The Seraglio—Palace of Beshik-Tash—The Sultan—An Attempt to withstand the Reforms—An Imposture Detected—Effect of the Sultan Mahmoud's Reforms—Hills above Constantinople—Views of the City from the Heights—Character of Constantinople—A Conflagration.

THE bearing of the people as you pass them in the streets at Constantinople is in strange harmony with the city, and must have been yet more striking before the late Sultan had commenced his unfortunate and ill-advised reform of costume. The women, who glide past you, beside fountain and garden-wall, in their long white robes and veils, which allow no part of the face to appear but the dark and mournful eyes, might be almost taken for ghosts revisiting the scenes of past delights. Not less singular is the effect when those of a higher rank and more splendid attire drive slowly by in a

carriage, at least as like a hearse as a Venetian gondola is like a coffin, consisting, as it does, of a shallow open body, richly gilded, without springs, and mantled by a canopy, sometimes of black cloth, and sometimes of a less gloomy colour. The slow and heavy oxen, that commonly draw these carriages, do not differ more from the agile horses of Attica than do the Turks from the Athenians, a contrast by which I was, no doubt, the more impressed on account of my recent residence at Athens. In place of the merry laugh, the flashing eye, and the elastic gait, there was in each Turk whom I met an expression of melancholy self-possession, which could hardly have been more pronounced had he been invariably under the influence of opium. In place of billiards or dice, or any active game, the everlasting pipe, long or short, crooked or straight, was the resource of those who had no other occupation, and of many who had. Buying and selling, bargaining and conversing, seemed to be carried on in a state of somnambulism. Pleasure itself seemed a serious

thing, and conserve of roses was handed to the customer with an air of heavy sedateness. "Eat," seemed the silent address of the Mussulman, "eat, O true believer, before you die."

The bazaar of Constantinople is one of its most interesting regions, being, perhaps, only equalled in general estimation and reverence by the Sultan's Seraglio, which is not a palace merely, but a vast and important district of Stamboul. The bazaar is, in fact, the palace of the people, where, shaded from the heat, each man may roam in a world as splendid as a mine, or the gem-lit caverns existing in a child's imagination. To one who has an eye for rich and quaint pictorial effects it is, indeed, an inexhaustible storehouse. The roofs of its long and narrow alleys are supported by stone arches, sometimes connected by wooden galleries which span the dark passages below like bridges. If you take your stand upon one of these galleries and look along from arch to arch, and down upon the moving groups beneath, dressed in the costume of all nations, and seen some-

times in shadow, and sometimes by the oblique light of a slanting beam, you fancy yourself in the aisles of a cathedral without limits, albeit of one devoted exclusively to the service of the money-changers. If you descend from that aerial station you find yourself in the midst of a scene not easily to be matched for richness. As in a garden the splendour of colouring is much increased where flowers of the same species are allowed to flourish in large unbroken masses, so the gorgeous effect of the bazaar is enhanced by the circumstance that to every branch of trade a separate portion of it is allotted.

The most brilliant part of this vaulted region is perhaps the armoury, hung as it is with every species of arms, ancient and modern, for use or for display; helmets and shields; suits battered in many a chivalrous field, glittering spears, Indian bows, blades from Damascus, scimetars from Egypt, every kind of harness in short for man or horse, embossed with gold and often with gems, enriched with arabesques, and disposed in the most fantastic patterns. In another

part of the bazaar, and for the benefit of a softer class of customers, you find yourself in a meadowy region of Cachemire shawls, numerous enough, one might imagine, to cover all the white shoulders that droop beneath ermine and diamond, in all the European capitals. In another part are suspended innumerable little mirrors enchased with pearl, and mounted with golden handles, which are among the most favourité possessions of the daughters of the East, adorning their inmost retreats, and by no means left at home when they make expeditions abroad. Still more beautiful is that part devoted to embroidery in silk and muslin, where you find brocaded stuffs stiff enough to stand, and emblazoned with flowers of every colour, and mantles as if of woven air, almost invisible from thinness, except where they are covered in golden traceries with verses from the Koran, or some Persian love poem. Other parts of the bazaar are a blaze of jewelry,—

> "A dusky empire with its diadems,
> One faint eternal even-tide of gems," *

* Endymion.

radiant with every sort of precious stone, separate or enwreathed in necklaces and rosaries, or inlaid in precious cups, rich plate, housings for horses, and head-dresses for their riders.

In addition to this multitudinous array, other parts of this enclosed city of trade (the distilled essence one may imagine it of Corinth or of Tyre) are devoted to spices from all parts of the East, porcelain of every sort, fruit, preserved and dry, and that confectionery, in the preparation of which Constantinople has no Western rival. There is no conceivable elaboration of fruit and sugar, with aromatic gums, precious juices, oils and creams, which is not to be found here in the prettiest and most various shapes, and scented with the most delicate odours. The interest of the scene is much increased by the strange aspect and bearing of the vendors of all those articles, some of whom are Jews, others Turks, while others are Greeks, Armenians, or Persians. Many a keen eye is fastened on the unwary Frank the moment he is in sight,

and many a finger beckons him on into the dusky recess in which the grave merchant is seated cross-legged on his carpet, with a pipe in his mouth. You enter, are hospitably asked to be seated, and are perhaps handed a pipe. In a little time the goods are produced with a leisurely sedateness, and a price is named at least double their real value; the merchant, if he is a Persian, assuring you that in having been directed to an honest man you prove that you were born under a fortunate star, and that he is offering you the article for half what he paid for it. You decline his proposal; he resumes his pipe in silence and apparent indifference, and at last rolls round on you a heavy sleepy eye, and names half the price he had demanded before. Your interpreter tells you that this time the price is a fair one, accordingly you pay down the money (the said interpreter of course receiving a due proportion of it), rise up and depart.

The most important district of Constantinople is that which is occupied by the Seraglio. It

includes a large part of the ancient Byzantium, covering the triangular promontory which juts out into the waves opposite to Scutari. The sea of Marmora on one side, and the "Golden Horn" on the other, bathe its ancient walls, behind which rise a multitude of domes, large and small, half veiled by the cypress-groves which embower them. During the absence of the Sultan I was permitted to visit this palace, built on the spot on which that of the Emperors of the East had stood for a thousand years, and invested with a tragic interest by many a domestic catastrophe as deplorable as those that commemorated the Houses of Laius or Atreus. Its interest is however derived from its position and its history, not its architectural pretensions. Its courts, the cloistral arcades round which are in some instances surmounted by ranges of domes, numerous enough to be picturesque, though not vast enough to possess grandeur, are large and straggling, but without beauty; and the gardens, though gaily decorated with trellis-work, fountains and orange-trees, are

neither remarkable for their flowers, nor for that sumptuousness and pomp which we associate with our idea of Oriental gardens, and of which a fairer vision may, perhaps, be won from Tennyson's "Recollections of the Arabian Nights," than any spot in Turkey could present to the bodily eye.

In a part of the garden close to the water side, are the buildings especially occupied by the Sultan when resident in the Seraglio, the site of which has evidently been chosen for the sake of the glorious view it commands. The apartments devoted to the royal wives and favorites are ranged round a court somewhat collegiate in character. The interior of this sacred precinct has seldom been seen by an European eye; and, indeed, till the last few years, it would have been at the risk of his life that either stranger or Turk, not belonging to the household, set his foot within the outer walls of the Seraglio. I was assured, however, that the apartments were as splendid as velvet and silk, gold and ivory, mirrors and marbles can make

them; and readily believe that in them, as in the "Castle of Indolence,"

> "Soft quilts on quilts, on carpets carpets spread,
> And couches stretch'd around in seemly band;
> And endless pillows rise to prop the head;
> So that each spacious room is one full swelling bed."

On such a bed the Emperors of the East reclined, till the invincible Janissaries knocked at their gates and startled their slumbers; and on such a bed the Commanders of the Faithful no doubt will continue to recline, until the barbarians of the North command them to begone, and make way for a hardier race.

The palaces of the Sultan in the neighbourhood of Constantinople and on the banks of the Bosphorus are almost beyond counting, and in many instances abound in picturesque effect and oriental pageantry. The largest of these comparatively modern buildings is called Beshik-Tash, and has little to recommend it except its vastness. The side of it which fronts the sea is adorned with a long colonnade of white marble; but the rest of the building is shapeless and

without expression — the consequence of its mimicking the character of western architecture. Its position, however, is sufficient to atone for all defects. Seated opposite to Scutari, and turned toward it, the view which it commands includes a long reach of the Bosphorus as well as of the Sea of Marmora, and nearly the whole city of Stamboul. Before it lies the Turkish fleet, when in harbour, so near that the sighing of the wind through the cordage can be heard in its saloons; and behind it rise its gardens, stage by stage, along the steeps of a hill which preserves many a sombre group of cypress and maple, and is richly fringed with acacias and almonds. As we approached its gate, advancing through a narrow passage, we met the Sultan, who rode forth attended by his suite. He rode a white horse, was covered with a dark blue cloak, and wore a red cap. As he approached, my Greek companion knelt down, a ceremony which I did not think it necessary to imitate. From the fact of our being the only intruders, I suspect we were where we had no

business to be, or at least to be seen; but we did not on that account suffer any molestation. The countenance of the Sultan was pale, and marked by an expression of sorrowful exhaustion. His dark melancholy eye rested on me as he passed; but I cannot, therefore, say that he looked at me; and if he saw me it was as he might have seen a dark streak on the wall close to which I stood. That gaze in which there is nothing of recognition, and in which no distinction is made between an animate and inanimate object appears peculiar to the East—perhaps to absolute power in the East.

An incident which occurred soon after the accession of the present Sultan, shows that in some respects, at least, he is not indisposed to follow up the strong traditions of his race. At the beginning of his reign the Ulema was resolved, if possible, to prevent the new Sultan from carrying on those reforms which had ever been so distasteful to the Turks, grating at once against their religious associations and their pride of race, and which recent events had certainly

proved not to be productive of those good results anticipated by Sultan Mahmoud. To attain this object the Muftis adopted the expedient of working on the religious fears of the youthful prince. One day as he was praying, according to his custom, at his father's tomb, he heard a voice from beneath reiterating in a stifled tone the words "I burn." The next time that he prayed there the same words assailed his ears. "I burn" was repeated again and again, and no word beside. He applied to the chief of the Imams to know what this prodigy might mean, and was informed in reply that his father, though a great man, had also been, unfortunately, a great reformer, and that as such it was but too much to be feared that he had a terrible penance to undergo in the other world. The Sultan sent his brother-in-law to pray at the same place, and afterwards several others of his household; and on each occasion the same portentous words were heard.

One day he announced his intention of going in state to his father's tomb, and was attended

thither by a splendid retinue including the chief doctors of the Mahometan Law. Again during his devotions were heard the words "I burn," and all except the Sultan trembled. Rising from his prayer-carpet he called in his guards, and commanded them to dig up the pavement and remove the tomb. It was in vain that the Muftis interposed, reprobating so great a profanation, and uttering dreadful warnings as to its consequences. The Sultan persisted. The foundations of the tomb were laid bare, and in a cavity skilfully left among them was found—not a burning Sultan, but a Dervise. The young Monarch regarded him for a time fixedly and in silence, and then said, without any further remark, or the slightest expression of anger, "You burn? We must cool you in the Bosphorus." In a few minutes more the Dervise was in a bag, and the bag, immediately after, was in the Bosphorus; while the Sultan rode back to his palace accompanied by his household and ministers, who ceased not all the way to ejaculate "Mashallah. Allah is great;

there is no God but God, and Mahomet is his prophet."

Whatever we may think of the means adopted in this instance to subvert the late Sultan's reforms, the present state of Turkey cannot be said to offer any testimony in favour of them. In his endeavour to infuse a new spirit of life into an old and decrepit empire, Mahmoud attempted a task almost as hopeless as that of the pious daughters who cut the limbs of their aged parent into pieces after putting him to death, and threw them into a boiling cauldron, hoping that, with the aid of "brewed enchantments" and Medea's potent herbs, that parent would stand among them once more "a youth 'mid youthful peers." If such a transformation could have been effected in the case of the Ottoman Empire, assuredly it was not through a process which destroyed all distinctive pride of race, undermined all old associations, and deprived the Turk of that strength which had remained his merely because he still continued to believe in himself, and to believe that his

Prophet was with him. If Mahmoud could have restored among his subjects the fervour of ancient faith, he would have needed no help beside. That, however, would have been a task almost hopeless in the case of the Turks; for their religion being essentially an aggressive one, and their mission being a mission of the sword, to stand still is to retrograde, and from the moment that the Crescent ceased to wax it necessarily waned. His endeavour, however, should at least have been to reanimate as far as he might that religious sentiment with which the whole social polity of Mahometan nations is absolutely identified; while by a reformation of manners, and by enforcing purity in the administration of justice he prepared the way for better things. It is the demoralisation of Turkey which necessitates the downfal of the Ottoman Empire — its sensual vices, its constitutional indolence, and its administrative abuses. Such corruptions eat like a cancer into the social body, and invoke the cleansing hand of retribution. When a nation has continued

long sunk in those vices which are weaknesses also, reform is almost a hopeless attempt. It has done its part; and another nation is called to take its place.

Instead of throwing himself on his only secure stay, and reanimating his tottering empire with the true strength of an eastern people, Mahmoud endeavoured to infuse into it a western vigour, and made the still stranger blunder of imagining that the energies of the West could be transplanted to Constantinople by mimicking its external peculiarities. Such an attempt was, of course, like all other affectations, a failure. In discarding the robe and the flowing beard the Turk divested himself of those associations in which his real strength lay, without catching any new associations with which to replace them. Still less could he thus acquire the civilisation of those whom he poorly imitated. Traditions may indeed be put off with an ancient costume; but arts and sciences are not put on with a new one. In many cases the change thus made was physically, as well as morally,

for the worse, in consequence of the disregard of custom and of climate which it involved. The Turkish cavalry had a firmer seat in their old saddles than they have ever acquired in their new; and the turban was practically useful alike in shielding their eyes from the sun and in protecting their heads from the Russian sword. The Moslem too cannot but painfully feel that change in their outward aspect which the traveller observes and deplores. Dignity and gravity constituted the character of their port and bearing; and those attributes in a large measure disappear with the ridiculous and mongrel dress they have assumed. While they wore the turban, the robe, and the beard, they were considered the most noble in aspect of all European races. Stripped of these appendages they are sadly reduced in the dignity and grandeur of their appearance, and are as far as ever from acquiring the mincing graces of a western salon.

The second expedition which I made at Constantinople enabled me to understand its

peculiar character, and to enjoy its admirable beauty more than weeks of groping among antiquities could have done. Leaving the crowded buildings of Pera behind, I ascended to that high ground which rises above the city and the suburbs that border the Bosphorus, swelling in some places into almost mountainous steeps, and in others expanding into downs or gently undulating wolds. Few things are more exhilarating than a gallop over these mountain plains, refreshed by the sea-breeze and enlivened by prospects ever varying, and of which the open and joyous beauty is hardly to be rivalled. Here and there they are sprinkled with pointed and inscribed stones jutting up from the soil, and erected on the spot upon which an arrow had fallen, shot from the bow of some Sultan, and worthy, in the estimate of courtiers, of eternal commemoration. It is on these plains that the traveller first forgets his vexation on landing and making a more intimate acquaintance with Constantinople. I know not, indeed, whether the spectacle on which he looks down

be not even nobler than that which he contemplates from the sea. Beneath him lies the seven-hilled city, every part of which lifts up its domes and minarets, relieved in many places against the sea, of which you catch glimpses, now over the summits of the hills, and now over the depressed ground between them.

From the higher of these elevations you command at once the whole city, extending from the Seraglio point to the Seven Towers at one side, and round by Pera at the other, in conjunction with the Bosphorus, and the city of Scutari, together with the lofty hill behind it, on the eastern slopes of which its cemetery of cypress stretches for miles away. In addition to this conjoint array of Nature's work and Man's, the Sea of Marmora flashes before you in its purple and gold, crowded with the shipping of all nations, and backed by the mountains of Asia, prominent among which Bithynian Olympus lifts its snowy dome above that region which the great Council of Nice has made as memorable in the ecclesiastical world as Con-

stantinople itself is in the secular. Though at a distance of sixty miles, that mountain (such is the brilliancy of its snows and the clearness of the air) looks so near, that you might fancy that the birds which rise in a startled flock from the court of some mosque below, shooting a glare of sudden sunshine from their slanted wings, could reach it in a few minutes' flight.

It is from these heights also that you have the full benefit of a circumstance especially characteristic of Constantinople, namely, that every commanding spot being appropriated to religious or public buildings, you take no note, from a distance, of its humbler details. Its insignificant wooden houses are then seen only in picturesque combination with the groves and gardens which embower them; and the colours which they are painted, yellow, red or black, according to the race of the inmate, are harmonised by distance, and blending with the light green of the fruit-trees, the dark green of the cypress, the purple of the sea and sky, the

dazzling white of mosque and mountain, and the occasional golden flash of the pointed minarets, compose a scene which bewilders and almost intoxicates by the splendour of its pageantry. Its peculiar effects would be utterly destroyed if it boasted stately streets and regular houses. From those heights you recognise it at once as a vast camp rather than a city, and as such you no more quarrel with its gaudy colours than you would with those of a flag. It is the great encampment of Islam on the shores of Europe. The Moslems themselves believe that in the Book of Fate a day is written, on which they will have to turn their steps once more toward the tomb of their prophet. I know not whether an obscure presentiment of this sort may not have contributed in some measure to make the inhabitants of Constantinople contented with their slight and fragile abodes. Certain, however, it is, that if all the private houses were destroyed in one of those conflagrations which perpetually devastate Constantinople, or could be folded up like tents and struck in an hour, or rose

like the flocks of sea-birds that skim the waves, and took their flight for the opposite shore, even then, the great buildings remaining, the general effect of the city would be much what it is. It would still be the encampment where the children of the prophet speak with their enemies in the gate. It would still be the Golden Gate of the ancient world, barring at will, or flinging open to the East and to the West, its two great watery portals, the Bosphorus and the Hellespont.

I was not long at Constantinople before I came in for what is of very frequent occurrence there, namely, a fire. Indeed, I believe, that as a storm is said to be always going on in some part of the sea, so a conflagration, larger or smaller, is always raging in some part of the narrow wooden streets of Stamboul. The people have few public amusements, and this is considered one of the best, if I may judge by the demeanour of the crowds whose singular bearing was to me more interesting than the spectacle I witnessed in common with them. At first I knew not

what it meant. I had observed that vast multitudes were moving, with what for a Turk is haste, toward the court of one of their mosques, and stationing themselves, as soon as they had reached it, on the steps, balustrades, and every spot whence a view was commanded. Joining their company I discovered the cause of the assembly in a whole street from which clouds of smoke were rising, and from which it was every moment expected that the flames would burst. Nothing could exceed the business-like alacrity of those who struggled for a place in the balconies, or the placid enjoyment of those who had attained one. In expectation of the event piles of carpets, pillows, and cushions had been already brought from the neighbouring houses, and placed wherever room could be found. On those comfortable seats the multitudes had established themselves, the men in in one part, sedately smoking, the women in another, now looking on and now playing with their children. In a moment refreshments of all sorts were provided—sweetmeats, confec-

tionery, and sherbet, by a number of rival purveyors, who advanced with unalarmed alacrity amid the smoke and falling sparks, plainly considering the scene of destruction a sort of "benefit" got up for their especial behoof, and unceremoniously elbowing to one side the police, who rushed with pails of water on their head to the rescue of the burning houses.

In a few minutes more the flames burst out with a loud crash, mounting high into the heavens, and flinging an exciting and pleasurable heat into the face of the crowds who, without ever removing their pipes (except to drink), gazed with silent, but impassioned, interest on a scene which, to them, was no more a matter of surprise than a street-preacher would be in Edinburgh, a "Funzione" at Rome, or Punchinello at Naples. Among the calm crowd of spectators were the proprietors of the burning houses, smoking, like their neighbours, and well assured that their loss had been determined by Allah long before the Prophet was born. In one sense they were right enough.

Doubtless, it has been predestined that fires should be frequent among them, as long as their houses are built of wood; and, indeed, I could not help thinking that they would never become rare until an Opera is established at Constantinople, or the exhibitions of "howling Dervises" become more numerous.

A Frenchman, near whom I found myself, whispered to me that the Turks were a jealous people, and that if they suspected that I was gazing with satisfaction at their calamity, they would feel anything but contentment; for which reason he exhorted me to assume an "air bien triste." I soon discovered that he was right, warned by occasional knocks in the ribs, sufficiently emphatic to dispel any immoderate gleams of satisfaction which might appear on my face. Certainly, if I had smiled at a people who, entirely indifferent about their own loss of property, were moved only by a stranger's sharing that indifference, I might have stood excused. I soon discovered, however, that it was no laughing matter; although, by changing

my place as soon as the portion of the crowd, in the midst of which I stood, had apparently seen enough of me, I contrived to remain a witness of this most characteristic scene.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BOSPHORUS.

Scenery of the Bosphorus—Palaces on the Bosphorus—Festal Groups on its Banks—Varieties of Female Beauty in the East—Turkish Women—Armenian Women—Character of Female Subjection—Eastern Habits of Reverence and Secrecy—Sunset on the Bosphorus—Therapia—Historic Trees—The "Giant's Mount"—Genoese Castle—The Black Sea—The Symplegades—Scenery of the Asiatic Valleys—The "Valley of Sweet Waters"—Castles of Europe and Asia—Europa—Influence of the East on the West.

Of all the excursions which can be made in the neighbourhood of Constantinople, the most beautiful and interesting is that up the Bosphorus and to the Black Sea. Having received an invitation from our ambassador, who was resident at Therapia, I took advantage of that opportunity to make myself acquainted with those shores which few can have seen once without retracing them often in memory. Accompanied by Dr. R., an American missionary of the Episcopal Church, with whom I was fortunate enough to become acquainted, and to

whose kindness I was much indebted during my stay at Constantinople, I embarked in one of those light caiques, which glide with such exquisite grace and swiftness along the waves. Our boatmen were strong and sinewy; and as they pulled against the current of the river-sea, our slender and shell-like boat trembled with the speed of the water that rushed under it, and bounded forward with every stroke of the oars, like a young antelope panting up a hill. The Bosphorus, in its numerous windings, is so frequently land-locked, that, while its prevailing character is that of a wide and racing river, it spreads often into a series of lakes; each of the beauteous family having features peculiar to itself, while among them all there is yet sufficient of general resemblance to prevent the attention from being overtasked, and the sense of harmony from being lost in variety. Its different scenes are a series of exquisite variations on the same original air.

In one of these lakes the expanse is wider and sunnier than in its neighbour; in another, the

rocks are steeper and the flowering shrubs more distinctly revealed. Here the heavy sea-birds are more clamorous as they half fly half float with expanded wings upon the pausing stream : there the water rushes in a swifter volume, and with many a darkened pool, round the marble terraces of the promontories, the fairest of which are sure to be crowned by some rich man's palace. The indented roof of these palaces casts a wavering shadow on the stream, and slightly obscures the gilded lattices, behind which (cages of imprisoned birds) the inmates of his harem are hidden. As we passed them, the breeze wafted us a fuller fragrance from their gardens, and sometimes the sound of minstrelsy, or the laugh of the captive beauties, gathered probably around some story-teller. Chained to the wall of the house, and tossing lightly on the ripple, or moored in a still canal passing under an archway into the palace, was commonly a caique, glowing with crimson and glittering with gold. I should have been glad to have seen the fair household embarking, but was not so

fortunate. Occasionally the palace belonged to an exiled Bey, or a Minister on whom the Imperial frown had fallen. In this case, through the rifted walls, still gay with paint, the wind sang a dirge long forgotten by human lips, and the loudest voice in the thickets was that of the locust.

Equally beautiful are those reaches of the Bosphorus, the scenery of which is of a less festal character, where the hills are higher, the glens narrower, and the cypresses more thickly clustered. In several places the current was so strong that our boatmen were unable to pull against it. On these occasions we landed, and a number of men coming to our assistance, the caique was dragged, with the aid of ropes, past the projecting rock. Every interruption afforded fresh opportunities of enjoying the scenes around us. In many places we passed close to a range of marble seats at the water's edge, on which, or near which, reposed gay companies of women, Turk, Greek, or Armenian, who had come forth to enjoy the sunset.

Generally the women of each nation sat apart; but the delight with which they played with the children (a gaily dressed boy running from group to group, and being apparently received with equal favour at each) proved that whatever prejudices divided them, they had, notwithstanding, something in common; and I dare say that if one of those children had fallen into the water, all the mothers would have been equally active in pulling him out. Whether by mischance, or but half by chance, on these occasions much more of the veiled face is revealed to the gaze or glance of the passer by, than he makes acquaintance with at Constantinople. The Turkish countenance, with its beautiful oval shape, its colourless purity and wax-like stillness, and above all its dark, tender, and dreamy eyes, has a charm about it which the more brilliant Greek lacks.

Severe charges are brought against the morals of Turkish women, and the jealousy with which they are guarded seems to corroborate them. It is, however, to be remembered, that where no

trust is reposed, no appeal is made to honour or to fidelity; and that a wife who is but one out of several, and who is liable to be divorced, cannot, even though she be devotedly attached to her husband (a thing very possible), regard marriage as invested with that sacramental sanctity which crowns the Christian marriage vow. Her husband has probably done more to corrupt than to elevate her nature; and that virtue, the attribute of her sex, which remains with her, has not found a defender in her lord. She has grown into maturity like a plant, not only without instruction, but without that far higher education, the result of manners, traditions, and institutions, from which the humblest classes in more favoured countries receive a moral protection and an intellectual development. Mahomet promised his followers that in Paradise their sons should be born and grow up in the space of one hour. If the Turkish women grew up as quickly they could not be more children than they are. It is likely enough that, thus deprived of the "graver

mind," which elevates the fidelity of instinct into a moral virtue, they regard every irregularity much as a child regards the robbing of an orchard; but if we knew no more of them than their devoted affection for their children, we could not doubt but that, in however undeveloped a state, the womanly virtues have an asylum in their breasts, and that the good seed, if planted there, would flourish as in a fruitful soil.

Compared with the Turkish women, the Greeks struck me as almost vulgar in appearance, though more frequently handsome than those of Athens and the Morea, and invariably distinguished by their black and flashing eyes. This effect was produced, no doubt, in part by the contrast between the seclusion of the veiled Turks, whose faces are seen but by stealth, and the unreserve of the Greek attire, which consisted of a wide turban of gauze intermixed with flowers and tresses, and of a gaily coloured jacket and petticoat, not loose enough for dignity, nor tight enough to reveal the grace of flowing

outlines. The Armenian women are, as a race, the most lovely I have seen. Their eyes combine something of the Turkish languor with the "lamping" irradiation of the Greek. Their hair curves in waves of the glossiest black down their fair brows, and their complexion has the freshness of the rosebud's inmost leaf. Their forms are tall, and characterised at once by stateliness and a suave and gentle grace. Their movements are modest, but marked also by a soft decision. Nothing can exceed the picturesque beauty of those Armenian women, which is much increased by their oriental costume, their crimson slippers, their cloaks of brilliant green or blue, and the long white veils which stream over their drooping shoulders. They are accused of being insipid in character; the fact probably is that they are submissive, mild, and unadventurous.

In spite of the ordinary error which associates especially with Mahometanism that subjection of the female sex, which has prevailed in the East ever since the patriarchal times, the

Christian Armenians not only live in as complete a seclusion as their Turkish sisters, but are under quite as strict a thraldom. Notwithstanding, I should think it likely that they are happy in their domestic relations. The subjection of women in the East did not arise originally from any want of appreciation of that sex, though perhaps from an undue appreciation of one element which enters into its composition ; and, like every other bondage long and willingly endured, has probably been maintained in consequence of the benefits it has conferred. In the West, whenever women have most completely thrown off that subjection, which in its milder forms is as graceful as a golden chain following the inclination of an ivory neck, the erring independence of the weaker sex, thus deprived of its natural support, has not been more strongly marked than the kindred irreverence of youth for age, of the pupil for the master, and of the client for his protector. In Parisian society, at its most corrupt Period, a woman was perhaps allowed more "of her own way"

than she had ever possessed elsewhere; but it would be as difficult to prove that such misnamed liberty proceeded from respect, as that it conduced to security, to virtue, or to happiness.

No doubt, in a perfect state of society, men and women would be more nearly on an equality, for in a more developed humanity the character of each sex would include more of those qualities which especially belong to the other. It does not follow, however, that in the attempt to leap at this conclusion women would acquire any of the nobler qualities of men, because they had discarded some of those peculiar to themselves. The experiment is a dangerous one. How long would women preserve that remnant of chivalrous devotion with which they are still regarded if they were to assume the attire of men as well as manly privileges? It is true that the degree of liberty as well as of respect which they have long enjoyed in the West, is owing to the glory originally cast npon womanhood by Christianity, which ever exalts the weak, and ennobles, while it enforces, Obedience: but it

does not follow that the extended liberties of recent times have proceeded from the same source, or that those who would most discard the Old Testament model, are attracted in any especial degree by that of the Second Dispensation. As the subjection of women in the East has not resulted exclusively from tyranny, so their seclusion has not been the effect of jealousy only: nor do veils and lattices date from the law of the Arabian Prophet. The Asiatics have ever been averse to our western habits of publishing everything at the market cross. With them modesty is reserved; which, indeed, it naturally is, if not accompanied by coldness. With them promiscuousness and curiosity, the unashamed boldness, and the prying inquisitiveness, are the characteristics of the despised "dog." With them secrecy is a virtue; and the tongue that discloses all things, and the eye that is "in the ends of the earth," are counted unfaithful and unclean. The root of this part of the eastern character is to be found in that Veneration which has ever been stronger in the

East than in the West, and which has there imparted a recluse and religious character to social and domestic institutions. It is to this instinct, no doubt, as well as to the more ardent passions of the East, that we are to attribute that seclusion of women which, like most institutions, has its good as well as its evil side. The habit of reverence and secrecy was strong even among the lively and loquacious Greeks, who not only concealed their religious mysteries, but counted Reserve a virtue. Their domestic habits were not so remote from that of eastern nations as we imagine: and the Sicilian historian, Dicæarchus, a disciple of Aristotle, informs us, in his treatise on the Greek cities, that in Thebes "the eyes of the women only are seen, the rest of their faces being covered by their garments." In Greece the spirit of Knowledge and the spirit of Reverence hung for a long time in happy balance. Among them the mind was as naked as the statues of the Sun-God, the heart as secret as his Delphic shrine.

It was late in the day when we arrived at

Therapia, and the beauty of the scene was indescribably increased at the setting of the sun, which had for some time before been hidden by the woody hills. The pine-trees, as we advanced, seemed to burn like flaming pyres, on the summit of their rocks: The white marble of the fountains was touched with a delicate pink, as the mountain snows, when a turn in the winding stream revealed them to us, were flushed with a roseate suffusion. All objects became more distinct at once and more brilliant; the shores appeared to approach each other; the very bud son the brakes, as we passed them, swelling out as if ready to burst, while the gilded lattices caught a brighter flame, and the gold-topped minarets shone like lamps against the cypressed slopes. The villages on every promontory exulted in the light; and many a dusky glen, winding inward from the strait, seemed filled with a crimson mist; an effect produced either by its luxuriant vegetation, or by some oblique ray, reflected from an orb invisible to us, which struck along its rocks

and tinged its atmosphere. The space beneath the groves looked dark as a cavern, while the foremost stems glowed with a ruddy light.

We passed the night at Therapia, a village about halfway between Constantinople and the Black Sea, seated in the most beautiful part of the Bosphorus, and for that reason much frequented by ambassadors, most of whom have residences there, as well as by the more opulent Turks and Greeks. Opposite to it the ships of many nations lie at anchor, with their respective flags streaming on the wind; and it happens not seldom, that while tacking up and down the strait they entangle their cordage in the lattices of the houses, or run a bowsprit right into an overhanging harem—no doubt to the mingled fear and mirth of its inmates, who, however, have never, I believe, attempted an escape by extempore embarcation in reply to so unceremonious a visit. Beyond Therapia are many interesting scenes, among others, one which claims historic fame. It is a wide flat plain, surrounded by high hills, in the centre of

which stands a circle of immense plane-trees, the trunks of which rise so close to each other that they may almost be deemed to constitute but a single tree. Beneath their shade Peter the Hermit is said to have preached the Crusade; and at a later period a Christian Prince halted there a troop of horse, (I dare not state their supposed number) and bade them rest there as in a tent, during the noontide heats. At Therapia we crossed the water, paying first a visit to an English frigate that lay midway in the stream, and roamed all day long about the hills and dales of Asia. We began by climbing a steep hill, known by the name of the "Giant's Mount," which commands a view of the distant mountains, as well as of nearly all the reaches of the Bosphorus. Its broad smooth brow is garlanded by a natural chaplet of spreading oaks, intermingled with lofty elms, and a rich underwood of holly. In the midst of the circle is a green space of soft and silky grass swelling upwards like a cushion, on which we lay for a long time, resting our eyes on the dark blue

water far below, faintly descried under the bowers of holly, but darting occasionally diamond scintillations beneath the drooping lid.

Pursuing our way we came to a gaunt old ruin, a Genoese castle placed on a commanding eminence,—a skeleton memorial of ancient times, whose fleshy pride has wasted away. Our reverence for the two great maritime republics, Venice and Genoa, is greater in the East than in Italy; for it is there that we realise the vast distance to which they pushed forth a mailed hand. That reverence, however, is far from being unalloyed. That power should degenerate into tyranny surprises no one; but when it is associated with perfidy too, it affords no steady resting place even to the retrospective imagination. Genoa extended but small aid to the great Christian Metropolis of the East, (which, but for the disunion and apathy of the Western Powers would never have seen the Cross displaced by the Crescent); and on not a few occasions it contracted for a separate peace. Power which is founded exclusively on com-

merce will usually be directed mainly by a commercial estimate of the expedient and the inexpedient, and will leave behind it but few trophies of heroism and honest fame.

This castle commands, from its vantage-ground, a view of the Black Sea, on which the Greek sailor looked with such aversion, contrasting it with his sunny Ægean. As gloomy as its name, its expanse spread far away into the distance; and I can easily believe that it is, as it is said to be, the laboratory of all the storms that vex the more westerly regions of the Sea of Marmora and the Levant. At the extremity of it, and just opposite to the entrance of the Bosphorus, stand the Cyanean Rocks, the far-famed Symplegades. As I looked upon their lofty grey masses, and that rift between them, through which the Argo sailed, I was vividly reminded of that noble passage at the commencement of the Medea, in which the Nurse laments that the pine-trees had ever left their home on Pelion's side, or exercised in rowing the heroic arms that wafted her mistress from

the Colchian shore. On the highest part of the rock is an altar of Parian marble, by whom placed, however, Tradition keeps no record:—perhaps by a shipwrecked sailor whose gratitude, though not his name, has found a record.

On our return, in place of pursuing the windings of the Bosphorus, we followed an inland path, passing through many a hollow glen, and stopping often to admire some new combination of mountains, marked by those peculiar attributes of vastness, stilness, luxuriance, and smoothness, which characterise the scenery of Asia. To describe those scenes in detail would be impossible. To all of them belonged the same character of openness, spaciousness, serenity, almost what might be termed Magnanimity, by one who reads the features of Nature in the hopes of tracing in them "an ebbing and a flowing soul," and who attaches a mystical interpretation to the works of Creation as well as to the word of Revelation. If the resemblance of these placid vales one to another might be charged with monotony, to me that

monotony seemed (like the monotonous music of waves upon a far-off strand) to diffuse an indescribable peace. I could have looked for the lotos in place of the arbutus; but lotos in that region there is none.

The most beautiful of these glens is one nearly opposite to Therapia, called the "Asian Valley of Sweet Waters." This is the favourite place of resort to the rich, and is especially thronged on Friday, the Mahometan Sabbath. Hither flock all the Beauties of Constantinople for their holiday revel; not only the wives of Beys, Emirs, and Pashas, but the Sultanas themselves. Over the short grass their carriages, glittering with gold and shaded by velvet and silken awnings, are slowly and noiselessly drawn by white oxen, and occasionally by horses; while the dark, impassioned eye gleams upon the passer-by between the breeze-stirred veil, and the pillow of crimson satin on which the pallid cheek reposes. Through the plain wanders a pellucid stream which falls into the Bosphorus, and on the banks of which tower up stately groves of

plane-trees, from twenty to thirty feet in circumference, and disposed often with a regularity almost architectural.

"A pillared shade with echoing walks between."

Under these tented groves the Persian carpets are spread, as well as many a Cashmere shawl, and mantle of orange or purple; and among them the revellers dispose themselves in festal companies, some smoking their pipes, some drinking sherbet, some restraining a truant curl with the aid of a pearl-compassed hand mirror, some watching the feats of a conjuror, some listening to a minstrel, Jewish, Greek, or Wallachian, and some in deep attention to a story-teller from Persia or Arabia, whose endless narrative is interrupted now and then by a fearless laugh ringing from the heart. From group to group pass, as the day wears on, the dark slave carrying water from the fountain in a silver pitcher, the confectioner laden with baskets of fruit and sherbet, and—the strangest part of the spectacle—the Frank stranger, inquisitive and ill

at ease, and looking as if he longed for business, sandwiches, and the *Times* newspaper, or even for *Galignani.*

In this secluded valley and its neighbourhood, are many interesting objects. Not far from the Bosphorus, and in the midst of noble trees, stands the fountain of Guiuk-Suy, which gives to the district its eastern name. It is built of white marble, and is richly adorned with arabesques. The Sultan possesses here one of his fifty-seven palaces built on the Bosphorus in the vain endeavour to enjoy all its beauties at once, by adding Omnipresence to his other attributes. For ages the Commanders of the Faithful have made this valley their favourite resort, especially in the summer. Here they sit in state, and are wondered at by their subjects. Here they smoke an amber-headed pipe, so long that, (as they mark the ascending wreaths of smoke in mood more and more abstracted,) while the nearer end of it is grasped close in the region of space and time, the remoter seems to them to hang over the limits of the universe, or

rest on the garden wall of Paradise, watched by expectant Houris. Here they drink their coldest sherbet, and wish for a palate as long as the neck of a swan, or the tallest lily stem that quivers in the Bosphorus. Here they meditate on abysmal subjects: — on the character of the Prophet, on their own magnificence, prosperity, and sanctity; on the countless attributes of Allah, and his surpassing glories, as set forth in the triumph of the faithful people, the immutable decrees of fate, the splendour of peacocks' tails, and the wonderful flavour of "conserve of roses." Who can wonder if, after burying themselves in such contemplations, their head should spin round as though they had drunk of the prohibited liquor, and they should send the bowstring to a distant Pacha, command half a dozen of their children to be put to death, or even prohibit to the faithful the "nourriture" of the beard and the use of the sacred turban?

Close to the Asian valley of sweet waters rises the Anadoli Hissari, one of the celebrated "Castles of Europe and Asia!" In

later times it was used as the prison of the Bostangis (the Sultan's body-guard), who were occasionally somewhat rapidly transferred from its dungeons to the keeping of the Bosphorus. On the opposite side of the strait is the Roumeli Hissari, or European Castle, built, as is asserted, on a ground plan, the foundation walls of which form the letters of the Prophet's name. This castle was the prison of the Janissaries. One of its most important parts bears the ominous name of "the Tower of Blood." In it the chiefs of the Janissaries, when suspected of conspiracy, were executed in secrecy, lest the allegiance of the body should be disturbed, whence they were conveyed by a subterranean passage to the water that rushes beyond its walls. When one remembers the multitudes whose last sob has been stifled by the waves of the Bosphorus, one is not surprised at a superstition prevalent, namely, that the wailing sea-fowl which fly above the strait, in multitudes that sometimes darken it, are the souls of the departed, subjected to a state of penance. It was between these

castles that Darius constructed that bridge of boats with which he connected the two continents.

Far more interesting, however, in its associations, is the village of Candalie, which tradition has united, whether justly or not, with the story of Europa, a fairer link between the two continents. Those who place no faith in the Bull which gave the Bosphorus its name, may, notwithstanding believe that Europe once sent forth a Lover, as brave and as unscrupulous, who lifted up his eyes to the daughter of Asia as she sported among "her comrades equal-aged," and who was as richly crowned by her as Jupiter was said to have been, when from the milk-white flanks of the illusive shape he assumed, the garlands fell upon the deep.

How different in character is that poetic legend, which celebrates the union of Asia with Europe, from the sublime truth at once of faith and science, which impelled the barque of the great European discoverer to a new Continent beyond a more perilous sea. The contrast between the artistic love-fiction and

the heroic triumph of knowledge, illustrates in so small degree, the opposite spirit which animated the early Hellenic mind, and directed the aspirations of modern Europe. And yet how much, even for us moderns, is contained in that ancient legend! What mighty result is destined ultimately to spring from the united energies of Europe and America we know not; but we know that it is from the union of Asia and Europe, symbolised in the Rape of Europa, that we owe almost all of high and noble that we possess. It was in Greece that the influences of the East and West first met; and assuredly at the confluence of these two mighty tides the human intelligence mounted to a height never before known. What is there deep or great among us in which an eastern element is not to be traced? All our arts, (elaborated indeed with a zeal which the graver Hebrew would have stigmatised as but a "following out of strange inventions,") so far as they acknowledge an Hellenic origin, rest on an Asiatic foundation. All our moral

and metaphysical systems are but new adaptations of ancient Oriental philosophy. The whole hierarchical structure of European society, so far as it is based on the idea of graduated orders, and not merely on superior force, is but the development, under whatever name of feudality, clanship, or aristocracy, of a principle as old as the patriarchal times. It is the same in our religion. The Bible (considered in its external relations) was written from one end to the other of both Testaments by Asiatics, and Asiatics of a single race; the earlier General Councils were Asiatic; the Creeds, and the leading principles of Church government, so far as they are to be counted human in origin, come to us from the East. In most of the greatest minds that have risen up among us, even in modern times, an Asiatic element is to be traced with more or less of distinctness. Wherever we build with solid materials we build on an Asiatic foundation; and Shem, amid the isles of the Gentiles, reposes in those tents which his more active brother Japhet is ever planting and shifting.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONSTANTINOPLE.

St. Sophia's—Interior of St. Sophia's—The Achmetie—Its Court—Fountain—Inscriptions—The Yeric Djami—The Suliemanie—Its Interior—A Christian Church—Ancient Mosaics—The Golden Horn—Cemetery and Mosque of Eyoub—The European "Valley of Sweet Waters"—The Armenians—The "Mosque of Blood."

No other buildings in Constantinople approach in interest to the mosques, all of which derive a character of grandeur from the fortunate circumstance that they follow the model exhibited in that building which made Justinian give thanks to God, who had permitted him to raise a cathedral that surpassed the glory of Solomon's Temple. After the lapse of nearly fourteen centuries, St. Sophia continues to lift on high that dome, the first that ever was raised to any great elevation, and remains the Mother Church, as it may be called, of every dome-surmounted fane in Europe. To its family belong St. Mark's at Venice, the glorious

Duomo of Florence, our own St. Paul's—nay, St. Peter's itself. How many of its children have died before it: how many may it not still be destined to survive! It is the third temple that has stood on that spot. The first St. Sophia, built by the great Constantine, was destroyed by an earthquake; the second, built by Constantius, fell a victim to popular tumult, being burned in one of those intestine feuds which troubled Constantinople during the earlier part of Justinian's reign. The present building has suffered little external change, and may yet lift the Greek Cross into heaven, and suspend its firmament over a Christian altar, centuries after the Crescent has ceased to insult the European shores.

The comparative flatness of St. Sophia's principal dome deprives it of that soaring expression which belongs to some of its great descendants; but he would be an undiscerning as well as a cold critic who could see little to admire in this venerable pile. It does not carry its head, it is true, with as lofty a port as its

neighbour, the Achmetie; but it still expresses a venerable strength, although a strength which needs, as well as imparts, protection. Its low dome, flat as that of a tonsured head, leans for support on those mighty walls which again lean upon others beyond them, gradually decreasing in elevation, so as to give to the upper part of the building somewhat of a pyramidal effect. A succession of half domes and shelving roofs press upon these walls, which are connected with each other by an endless series of buttresses and arches. The whole building seems thus to lean inwards upon itself for support, bound together, like an empire in decline, by multitudinous bands and props, one growing out of another. It is characteristic of the Greeks, as lovers of Knowledge rather than of Law or of Rule, that this, their great cathedral, should have been dedicated to the Eternal *Wisdom* of the Father. The Romans called their metropolitan church (the palatial temple of the world) by the name of him to whom were committed the Keys; and the English conse-

crated their great modern church to the Apostle of the Nations. Such actions, even when determined in part by accident, indicate something as to the aspirations, if not as to the habits and characters, of nations.

St. Sophia, like every other religious building in Constantinople, is approached through a large and cloistral court. This court is paved with marble, and over its shining platform many a plane-tree casts its shade. In the midst is a marble fountain, covered with an octagonal roof, which projects far beyond it, and screened by a lattice-work of iron. In this water the devotee washes before he enters the sacred building; and many a group spread their carpets and smoke their pipes around, interspersed with pilgrims from remote lands, and merchants who sell relics, amulets, and other merchandise of a less dignified order.

Few Christians have ever been allowed to examine in its details the interior of St. Sophia's; a glance from the doors, or a hurried survey, is commonly the traveller's utmost boast. The

opposition thrown in the way of a leisurely inspection is the less to be regretted, however, as it is the interior of the building which has suffered most by that change which has converted it into a mosque. Its main features remain still unsubverted. The Turks were not barbarous conquerors: indeed, the very day on which St. Sophia's fell into their hands, Mahomet the Second, observing a fanatical soldier tear up the mosaic pavement, admonished him to reverence with his scimetar. Whitewash, however, has done its best to deface what it has not destroyed. Probably whoever has wandered round St. Mark's has seen what more nearly resembles the St. Sophia of Justinian than the traveller who explores the building at the present day. Its dome, composed of pumice-stone and brick, and pierced with twenty-four windows, is a hundred and fifteen feet in diameter, and hangs at the height of a hundred and eighty above the pavement, the vast arches which support it resting upon four massive piles, flanked by four columns of Egyptian granite.

The building, which externally is nearly square, being two hundred and seventy-three feet in length, by two hundred and forty-seven in breadth, is internally divided by pillars into the shape of a Greek cross. It is, however, the general character of the building only which remains unchanged. We should now probably look in vain for the western vestibule in which the penitents took their humble station; and certainly, for its baptistery, its gorgeous sacristy, the marble balustrade separating the nave from the choir, and terminated by the thrones of the Emperor and the Patriarch, the altar in the eastern apse, the seats of the clergy around it, the brazen galleries and gates of bronze, and the countless mosaics, precious stones and metals with which the shrine was enriched.

The marbles of St. Sophia were the most elaborate and varied that the world could supply, including, among its hundred columns, every species; the pale Carystian, the Phrygian of rose colour or purple, the starred porphyry of Egypt, the green Laconian, the golden

Mauritanian, the black Celtic, and as many more; besides every variety of agate and jasper, which private zeal or public munificence could transport from the quarries of Asia Minor, the Greek islands, and every subject land between Persia and Spain. Few great churches have been raised with such rapidity as St. Sophia's. Under the care of Anthemius, the architect, and his ten thousand labourers, encouraged by the familiarity of the Emperor, who is said to have inspected at stated intervals their advancing work, clothed in a linen tunic, the cathedral was completed in less than six years from its foundation.

Near to St. Sophia's, between it and the Hippodrome, stands one of the loftiest and richest of the mosques, that which bears the name of the Sultan Achmet. Lifting on high its haughty dome, the curve of which is far more elevated than that of its neighbour, it differs from the church of Justinian as an elm differs from a spreading oak. Beneath the central cupola are clustered several smaller

domes and half-domes. The Achmetie boasts no fewer than six minarets, each enwreathed with three galleries, from one of which the clear tones of the Muezzin pealing out of the shining vault, like a divine summons, calls the people to prayer. Every royal mosque is marked by the adjunct of two minarets, and several of them possess four, but the Achmetie alone has six. It is to be hoped that, whenever the Russians are in possession of Constantinople, they will not pull down those light and beautiful structures, which, rising from an undergrowth of domes, produce a singularly fortunate effect, analogous to that which we observe in our pleasure grounds, where the cypress or the Lombardy poplar spires up from a thicket of round-headed shrubs.

The court of the Achmetie is surrounded by a cloister, the pillars of which consist of many-coloured marbles, (fortunately not white-washed), supporting arches each of which is crowned by a low dome. In the centre stands a hexagonal fountain, the dome of which rests upon six

sharp and lofty arches in their turns supported by the quaint elaborate capitals of the slender columns. The beauty of these fountains is much increased by their golden lattices which cast a glittering net-work on the dark water within, and a braided shadow on the pavement around. In this court you see amid the motley crowd, as usual, the merchant with his wares, and the Turk with his pipe, or sometimes a votary absorbed in prayer, and kneeling with forehead to the pavement. Far above all, seen over this cloistral arcade, rises the central dome, and one or two of those minarets, the line of which serves to define its curve. The cloisters of most mosques are largely frequented by those friendly and fearless birds which the Moslems so reverently protect. In one of them so vast is the number of doves, attracted thither by the liberality of the Faithful, that when they rise from the pavement on which they have been feeding, the echoes of the court are thrilled with a soft thunder, and the air is shaken as by a storm, while the branches of the almonds

wave around in the darkened space, and a few blossoms patter to the ground.

The porches through which you enter the mosques are among the most picturesque parts of the buildings. They are surmounted by exquisite little vaults or roofs, as richly fretted with carved work as the roof of a Bishop's Throne in one of our cathedrals. Above them extend, winding in golden traceries, inscriptions in the Arabic character, consisting chiefly of sentences from the Koran, which, flashing from a ground-work of dark green or purple, gleam like mimic constellations reflected in a sea. Everywhere in Constantinople, over gate, and tomb, and bath, and palace front, you are confronted by those blazoned texts from the Koran, which are scattered as widely as devout pictures are in Roman Catholic countries, and look as if the endeavour had been to make the city one great Book. Nowhere has bibliolatry, or devotion to a book, been carried farther than among the Moslems. The reason is to be found, probably, in the fact that their religion, instead of

including a law, *is* simply a law, as well as in the rationalistic character of their mind, and in the absence of imaginative sentiment within them, and of the more genial arts around them.

The Yeric Djami, or mosque of the Sultana Valide, is the most picturesque of all in its position, rising close to the ferry between Galata and Stamboul, in a neighbourhood ever thronged by travellers new landed, merchants hastening to inspect their goods, and idlers frequenting the market-place for news. From the midst of the sombre or gaudy buildings, huddled in strange confusion along the shore, it lifts up its serene and radiant mass like a vision of purity in a corrupt world : almost beneath its shadow the homeward boat swings with furled sails upon the green and darkened wave, now falling back from the wall, and now dashing against it ; and within its ken innumerable caiques, those Arab steeds of the sea, fleet over the sunny expanse in the distance. The most characteristic feature of this mosque is its majestic portal, consisting of three vast and lofty arches, the

pillars of which rest on a wide flight of marble steps. Looking through these porches, which from their great depth are dusky as a grotto, you see dimly its brazen gates studded with mother-of-pearl. In line with these porches runs a terrace, surmounted by a sort of double gallery, consisting of two ranges of arches, one above another. These arches, which form mainly the outer wall of the building, are of two different heights and sizes, the larger and the smaller occurring alternately, and are supported on the florid capitals of low pillars. The picturesque effect of this façade is much increased by the immediate neighbourhood of two immense maple trees, which lift their hollow turrets high into the air, and extend their fresh green canopy against a sky of glistening blue. Beneath the dome rests the tomb of the foundress.

In one respect the "Suliemanie," or mosque of Solyman the Magnificent, is the most imposing of all these structures, occupying, as it does, the most elevated ground in Constantinople. Beside its central dome, it is surmounted by ten others

of inferior size, and by several half domes. It measures 234 feet in length by 227 in breadth, and its internal court is also of unusually large dimensions. Before its lofty portal stands a range of columns of Egyptian granite, and above it runs an Arabic inscription, stating that the Lord of the Earth, the Commander of the Faithful, and the Conqueror of East and West, the tenth Emperor of the Ottomans, had raised this temple to the glory of God, the Créator of the universe, between the years 1550 and 1556—about the same number of years having sufficed for the building of Solyman's and of Justinian's temple.

The Suliemanie, like most other mosques, has its cloister, its minarets, its fountain, its pious institution (in this instance a bedlam), and its Medresseh or college. There are not fewer than twelve such colleges, with libraries attached to them, in Constantinople; but their learning, I fear, may be numbered among the things gone by. The interior is stately, though not divested of that characteristic coldness and blankness

which belongs to mosques. Its domes, round the lower region of which runs a sort of belt pierced through with numerous very minute windows, are supported each by four vast arches. These arches are in some instances partially filled up by a wall, itself supported by smaller arches propped on pillars, and pierced in its higher compartment by several ranges of round-headed windows. Beneath the chief dome runs a circle of brass, from which innumerable coloured lamps, lighted at night, are suspended by chains. The effect is brilliant, of course, but theatrical rather than ecclesiastic. The pillars of the Suleimanie are brought chiefly from Alexandria Troas. The walls are decorated with gilded traceries, consisting of sentences from the Koran, as well as the many mystical names of the Creator, inscribed in Arabic. These are the chief mosques in Constantinople, and the models after which the rest have been built. Most of them abound in precious marbles, and many of them possess interesting peculiarities. The most interesting

to Christian eyes is that which bears the name of "Kilisi giamisi." It was originally a church built by the Emperor Anastasius; and, like St. Sophia's, it pines in bondage. By a fortunate accident, there remain on one of its domes some pictures in mosaic, representing the crucifixion and other sacred themes. How they escaped the Turkish fanaticism it is hard to say.

There are few things which the sojourner at Constantinople enjoys more than an expedition by boat up the winding haven of the "Golden Horn," a title which might equally be justified by the glorious light which morning and evening fling upon the mouth of the harbour, and by the matchless provision made there for Commerce; which, following its windings for seven miles through the city, might empty her Cornucopia on its banks. On one side, as you enter it, extends the Seraglio, and, beyond it, St. Sophia and the mosque of the Sultan Achmet: on the other, rises the Frank city of Pera, with its suburbs of Tophana and Galata, domineered over by the ambassadors of the great European

Powers, who, in the present decrepit condition of the Ottoman empire, far from being exposed to any chance of an imprisonment in the Seven Towers, are looked up to as so many kings, both by the inhabitants of Stamboul and by their own countrymen. Your caique shoots rapidly along the water, passing the ships of all nations, which lie so close to the citied shores that their canvas seems to lean on the projecting roofs. Pursuing your way beyond a wooden bridge of great length which spans the flood, you reach, at its further end, the district of Eyoub, situated at the north-eastern extremity of Stamboul, and regarded as its most sacred region. Far up the hill, and commanding the noblest views from the European side of the water, rises its cemetery, only inferior in sanctity to that of the Asiatic Scutari. Among the tombs which its multitudinous cypresses shade, is that of the far-famed Ali Pacha of Yanina. The contrast between the two views commanded from this cemetery is striking; one of them extending over the city, the sea, the Bosphorus, Scutari,

and, behind it, the dark steep of Bulgurlhu, and being, therefore, eminently marked by the characteristic splendour of Constantinopolitan scenery; while the other reveals to you a quiet and shady glen, the European "Valley of Sweet Waters," with its deep green grass and its stately trees.

The Mosque of Eyoub is one of the largest in Constantinople, and, probably, is the richest. On this subject, however, we have nothing but conjecture to guide us; for no Christian, I believe, has ever been admitted into its interior. This temple is the great sanctuary of Stamboul—a sort of domestic Mecca. It was raised by Mahomet the Second, a few years after the capture of Constantinople, in memory of a certain warrior of the Faith, and companion in arms of the Prophet himself, who fell, a martyr in the estimate of his brother warriors, during the siege by the Saracens, A.D. 668. The exact spot on which the Arabian chief perished was revealed in a dream to the Sultan, if we are to trust his account of the matter. Mahomet the

Second set another seal upon the sanctity of this temple, by decreeing that, within its walls, the Sultans should be girded with the Sword of Empire, successively and for ever. The ceremonial is ever performed by the Scheick of the Mevlevi Dervishes, entitled Mollah Hunkiar, in whose family the right remains, on account of its being descended from the race of the Abbassides. The representative of that sacred race may be an old man on the verge of the tomb, or he may be an infant; but until his hands have bound the girdle of the Sword of Othman, the Sultan lacks that religious consecration which invests him with his two-fold dignity of Emperor and Commander of the Faithful.

This ceremony does not inappropriately take place in the temple dedicated to the memory of Eyoub, or Job. In his youth he had been among those who sheltered Mahomet, when a fugitive. He had fought under the standard of the Crescent in many an arduous battle: he had been a follower of Ali, as well as of the Prophet; and it was in his old age that the

Arab chieftain engaged in that enterprise against what he, no doubt, considered as the metropolis of Christendom, which, as Mahomet had announced, assured the forgiveness of their sins to all soldiers serving in the holy cause. The followers of the Prophet regard him with feelings similar to those once entertained among Christians toward Godfrey of Bulloigne, or any other great Crusading chief.

Beyond the district of Eyoub, and the limits of the city, lies a vale, still as a convent, and one of my favourite resorts while in Constantinople—the celebrated "Valley of the Sweet Waters." It is surrounded on all sides by hills, which shield without over-shadowing it; and its smooth expanse is covered with the richest and greenest grass (the pasture during spring of the Sultan's Arab horses), and traversed by the silver current of the Barbyses, winding its way to the "Golden Horn." Over this shallow but secluded vale, trees of a stately height and venerable age are scattered, sometimes singly, but more often in groups. In summer this spot is, even more

than the Asiatic valley of sweet waters, the resort of all who love idleness or gaiety. On these occasions it is not the votaries of pleasure only whom you meet; the merchant is there likewise, and not a little of business is transacted. There the Greek makes his bargain, and talks his customer out of patience, if not out of countenance. The Jew there realises his profit, and there the patient Armenian meditates, and turns whatever happens to the best account. That race interested me much during my stay at Constantinople. They belong for the most part to the Greek Church, but they are divided into several distinct religious communities; and no small proportion of them are governed by a Patriarch, who, though he preserves many local peculiarities of worship, acknowledges the supreme authority of the Roman Pontiff. One recognises them at once by their high and oval foreheads, round which the hair is shaven, their extreme pallor, which in some parts of the face seems tinged with a faint lilac, their singular smoothness of countenance, their expression of long

suffering (they have clung in their captivity to their ancestral institutes with almost a Jewish fidelity), and a certain heavy gleam in the drooping eye, which resembles a dying lamp when the light has burned down to the oil in which it is mirrored.

The Sultan retires for a portion of each year to his palace in the "Valley of the Sweet Waters," and to this quiet region the imperial harem is transferred on these occasions. That transference creates a great confusion in the city, the surrounding hills being occupied with troops, while a regular *cordon* is established round the valley to prevent the public from catching even a distant sight of the fair Sultanas, whose progress is conducted with as much mystery as attended the ride of Godiva. A more interesting object than the palace is seen at the remoter end of the glen: a mosque, which lonely and retired as it is, derives a deeper seclusion from the thick plane-trees that cluster around it, through which its crowded domes are hardly visible. The whole of this

mosque is painted red, and its history is implied in its ominous title, "The Mosque of Blood." During a period of intestine feud at Constantinople it was broken into by a body of soldiers, many of whom perished on its pavement; in consequence of which desecration, it now stands a deserted temple. There is something at once mysterious and touching in the aspect of this forsaken fane, which was the goal of many of my wanderings among the hills around Stamboul.

CHAPTER IX.

ADVENTURE IN A HAREM.

A French Adventurer—Fortune made by Conjuring—Conjuring Exploits—Visit to the House of a Turk—His Mother—His Wives—Beauty of Eastern Women—The Favourite—Circassian Beauty—Failure of the Conjuror's Incantations—A Timely Retreat.

A SHORT time before leaving Constantinople I enjoyed a piece of good fortune which I believe has fallen to the lot of few men. Often as I passed by the garden walls of some rich Pacha, I felt, as every one who visits Constantinople feels, no small desire to penetrate into that mysterious region—his harem—and see something more than the mere exterior of Turkish life. "The traveller landing at Stamboul complains," I used to say to myself, "of the contrast between its external aspect and the interior of the city; but the real interior, that is the inside of the houses, the guarded retreats of those veiled forms which one passes in gilded caiques—

of these he sees nothing." Fortune favoured my aspirations. I happened to make acquaintance with a young Frenchman, lively, spirited, and confident, who had sojourned at Constantinople for a considerable time, and who bore there the character of prophet, magician, and I know not what beside. The fact is, that he was a very clever fellow, living on his wits, ever ready to turn his hand to anything, and numbering among his other accomplishments, a skill in conjuring feats extraordinary even in the East. He used to exhibit frequently before the Sultan, who always sent him away laden with presents, and who would, probably, had he professed the Mahometan Faith, have made him his Prime Minister or his Lord High Admiral.

There was nothing which this conjuror could not do. He told me that on one occasion, dining in a numerous company, he had contrived to pick the pocket of every one present, depriving one of his watch, another of his purse, and a third of his pocket-handkerchief. As soon as the guests discovered their losses, to

which he managed to direct their attention, a scene of violent excitement ensued, every one accusing his neighbour of theft; and at last it was agreed that the police should be sent for to search the pockets of all present. The police arrived, and the search was duly made, but without any effect. "I think," said the young magician, "it would be but fair that the police should themselves undergo the same scrutiny to which we have all submitted." The suggestion was immediately acted on; and to the amazement of all present, and especially of the supposed culprits, in the pockets of the police all the missing articles were found.

The life of this man had been strange and eventful. Having quarrelled with his family in early youth he had assumed an incognito, and enlisted as a private soldier, I forget in what service. On one occasion, in his first campaign, he was left for dead on the field of battle. In the evening some peasants visited the field for the sake of plunder. He was badly wounded, but had his wits sufficiently about him to know

that, if he wished not to have his throat cut, he had better lie still and feign to be dead. In his turn he was visited by the marauders; but, as fame goes, it turned out that while they were hunting after the few pence he possessed, he contrived to lighten their pockets of their accumulated spoil. He had grown tired of war, however, and had settled in Constantinople, where he embarked in all manner of speculations, being bent, among other things, upon establishing a theatre at Pera. In all reverses he came down, like a cat, on his feet: he was sanguine and good-humoured, always disposed to shuffle the cards till the right one came up; and, trusting a good deal to Fortune, while he improved what she gave, he was of course rich in her good graces.

One day this youth called on me, and mention that a chance had befallen him which he should be glad to turn to account,—particularly if sure of not making too intimate an acquaintance with the Bosphorus in the attempt. A certain wealthy Turk had applied to him for

assistance under very trying domestic circumstances. His favourite wife had lost a precious ring, which had doubtless been stolen either by one of his other wives, under the influence of jealousy, or by a female slave. Would the magician pay a visit to his house, recover the ring, and expose the delinquent? "Now," said he, "if I once get within the walls, I shall be sure to force my way into the female apartments on some pretence. If I find the ring, all is well: but if not, this Turk will discover that I have been making a fool of him. However, as he is a favourite at Court, and cannot but know in what flattering estimation I am held there, he will probably treat me with the distinction I deserve. In fine, I will try it. Will you come too? you can help me in my incantations, which will serve as an excuse." The proposal was too tempting to be rejected, and at the hour agreed on we set off in such state as we could command (in the East, state is essential to respect), jogging over the rough streets, in one of those hearse-like carriages without

springs, which bring one's bones upon terms of far too intimate a mutual acquaintance.

We reached at last a gate, which promised little; but ere long we found ourselves in one of those "high-walled gardens, green and old," which are among the glories of the East. Passing between rows of orange and lemon-trees, we reached the house, where we were received by a goodly retinue of slaves, and conducted, accompanied by our dragoman, through a long suite of apartments. In the last of them stood a tall, handsome, and rather youthful man, in splendid attire, who welcomed us with a grave courtesy. We took our seats, and were presented in due form with long pipes, and with coffee, to me far more acceptable. After a sufficient interval of time had passed for the most meditative and abstracted of men to remember his purpose, our host, reminded of what he had apparently forgotten by my companion's conjuring robes, an electrical machine, and other instruments of incantation, which the slaves carried from our carriage, civilly enquired

when we intended to commence operations. "What operations?" demanded my companion, with much apparent unconcern. "The discovery of the ring." "Whenever his Highness pleased, and it suited the female part of his household to make their appearance," was the answer.

At this startling proposition even the Oriental sedateness of our majestic host gave way, and he allowed his astonishment and displeasure to become visible. "Who ever heard," he demanded, "of the wives of a true believer being shown to a stranger, and that stranger an Infidel and a Frank?" As much astonished in our turn, we demanded, "When a magician had ever been heard of, who could discover a stolen treasure without being confronted either with the person who had lost or the person who had appropriated it?" For at least two hours, though relieved by intervals of silence, the battle was carried on with much occasional vehemence on his part, and on ours with an assumption of perfect indifference. Our host at last, perceiving that our obstinacy was equal to the decrees

of Fate, retired, as we were informed, to consult his Mother on the subject. In a few minutes he returned, and assured us that our proposition was ridiculous; upon which we rose with much dignified displeasure, and moved toward the door, stating that our beards had been made little of. A grave-looking man who belonged to the household of our host, and occupied apparently a sort of semi-ecclesiastical position, now interposed, and after some consultation it was agreed that as we were not mere men, but prophets, and infidel saints, an exception might be made in our favour without violation of the Mussulman law; not, indeed, to the extent of allowing us to profane the inner sanctuary of the harem with our presence, but so far as to admit us into an apartment adjoining it, where the women would be summoned to attend us.

Accordingly, we passed through a long suite of rooms, and at last found ourselves in a chamber lofty and large, fanned by a breeze from the Bosphorus, over which its lattices were suspended, skirted by a low divan, covered with

carpets and cushions, and "invested with perpureal gleams" by the splendid hangings through which the light feebly strove. Among a confused heap of crimson pillows and orange drapery, at the remote end of the apartment, sat, or rather reclined, the mother of our reluctant host. I could observe only that she was aged, and lay there as still as if she had belonged to the vegetable, not the human world. Usually she was half-veiled by the smoke of her long pipe; but when its wreaths chanced to float aside or grow thin, her dark eyes were fixed upon us with an expression half indifferent and half averse.

Presently a murmur of light feet was heard in an adjoining chamber:—on it moved along the floor of the gallery; and in trooped the company of wives and female slaves. They laughed softly and musically as they entered, but seemed frightened also; and at once raising their shawls and drawing down their veils, they glided simultaneously into a semicircle, and stood there with hands folded on their breasts. I sat opposite to them, drinking coffee and smoking, or pretend-

ing to smoke a pipe eight feet long: at one side stood the Mollah and some male members of the household: at the other, stood the handsome husband, apparently but little contented with the course matters had taken; and my friend, the magician, moved about among the implements of his art clad in a black gown spangled with flame-coloured devices, strange enough to strike a bold heart with awe. Beyond the semicircle stood two children, a boy and a girl, holding in their hands twisted rods of barley-sugar about a yard long each, which they sucked assiduously the whole time of our visit. There they stood, mute and still as statues, with dark eyes fixed, now on us, and now on the extremity of their sugar wands.

My companion commenced operations by displaying a number of conjuring tricks intended to impress all present with the loftiest opinion of his powers, and stopped every now and then to make his dragoman explain that it would prove in vain to endeavour to deceive a being endowed with such gifts. To these expositions the

women apparently paid but little attention; but the conjuring feats delighted them; and again and again they laughed until, literally, the head of each dropped on her neighbour's shoulder. After a time the husband, who alone had never appeared the least entertained, interposed, and asked the conjuror whether he had yet discovered the guilty party. With the utmost coolness, my friend replied, "Certainly not: how could he while his Highness's wives continued veiled?" This new demand created new confusion and a long debate: I thought, however, that the women seemed rather to advocate our cause. The husband, the Mollah, and the mother again consulted; and in another moment the veils had dropped, and the beauty of many an Eastern nation stood before us revealed.

Four of those unveiled Orientals were, as we were informed, wives, and six were slaves. The former were beautiful indeed, though beautiful in different degrees and in various styles of beauty: of the latter two only. They were,

all of them, tall, slender, and dark-eyed, "shadowing high beauty in their airy brows," and uniting a mystical with a luxurious expression, like that of Sibyls who had been feasting with Cleopatra. There was something to me strange as well as lovely in their aspect—as strange as their condition, which seems a state half-way between marriage and widowhood. They see no man except their husband; and a visit from him (except in the case of the Favourite) is a rare and marvellous occurrence, like an eclipse of the sun. Their bearing toward each other was that of sisters: in their movements I remarked an extraordinary sympathy, which was the more striking on account of their rapid transitions from the extreme of alarm to child-like wonder, and again to boundless mirth.

The favourite wife was a Circassian, and a fairer vision it would not be easy to see. Intellectual in expression she could hardly be called; yet she was full of dignity, as well as of pliant grace and of sweetness. Her large black eyes, beaming with a soft and stealthy radiance,

seemed as if they would have yielded light in the darkness; and the heavy waves of her hair, which, in the excitement of the tumultuous scene, she carelessly flung over her shoulders, gleamed like a mirror. Her complexion was the most exquisite I have ever seen, its smooth and pearly purity being tinged with a colour, unlike that of flower or of fruit, of bud or of berry, but which reminded me of the vivid and delicate tints which sometimes streak the inside of a shell. Though tall she seemed as light as if she had been an embodied cloud, hovering over the rich carpets like a child that does not feel the weight of its body; and though stately in the intervals of rest, her mirth was a sort of rapture. She, too, had that peculiar luxuriousness of aspect, in no degree opposed to modesty, which belongs to the East: around her lips was wreathed, in their stilness, an expression at once pleasurable and pathetic, which seemed ever ready to break forth into a smile: her hands seemed to leave with regret whatever they had rested on, and in parting to

leave something behind; and in all her soft and witching beauty she reminded me of Browning's lines—

> "No swan-soft woman, rubbed in lucid oils,
> The gift of an enamoured god, more fair."

As feat succeeded to feat, and enchantment to enchantment, all remnant of reserve was discarded, and no trace remained of that commingled alarm and pleased expectation which had characterised those beaming countenances when first they emerged from their veils. Those fair women floated around us, and tossed their hands in the air, wholly forgetting that their husband was by. Still, however, we had made but little progress in our inquiry; and when the magician informed them that they had better not try to conceal anything from him, their only answer was a look that said, "You came here to give us pleasure, not to cross-question us." Resolved to use more formidable weapons, he began to arrange an electrical machine, when the Mollah, after glancing at it two or three times, approached and asked

him whether that instrument also was supernatural. The quick-witted Frenchman replied at once, "By no means; it is a mere scientific toy." Then, turning to me, he added, in a low voice, "He has seen it before—probably, he has travelled." In a few minutes, the women were ranged in a ring, and linked hand in hand. He then informed them, through our interpreter, that if a discovery was not immediately made, each person should receive, at the same moment, a blow from an invisible hand; that, the second time, the admonition would be yet severer; and that, the third time, if his warning was still despised, the culprit would drop down dead. This announcement was heard with much gravity, but no confession followed it: the shock was given, and the lovely circle was speedily dislinked, "with shrieks and laughter." Again the shock was given, and with the same effect; but this time the laughter was more subdued. Before making his last essay, the magician addressed them in a long speech, telling them that he had already discovered the secret, that

if the culprit confessed, he would make intercession for her, but that, if she did not, she must take the consequences. Still no confession was made. For the first time, my confident friend looked downcast. "It will not do," he said to me; "the ring cannot be recovered: they know nothing about it: probably it was lost. We cannot fulfil our engagement; and, indeed, I wish," he added, "that we were well out of all this."

I confess I wished the same, especially when I glanced at the master of the household, who stood apart, gloomy as a thunder-cloud, and with the look of a man who thinks himself in a decidedly false position. The Easterns do not understand a jest, especially in a harem; and not being addicted to irony (that great safety-valve for enthusiasm), they pass rapidly from immoveability to very significant and sometimes disagreeable action. Speaking little, they deliver their souls by acting. I should have been glad to hear our host talk, even though in a stormy voice: on the whole, however, I trusted much

to the self-possession and address of my associate. Nor was I deceived. "Do as you see me do," he said to me and the dragoman; and then, immediately after giving the third shock, which was as ineffectual as those that preceded it, he advanced to our grim host with a face radiant with satisfaction, and congratulated him vehemently. "You are a happy man," he said. "Your household has not a flaw in it. Fortunate it was that you sent for the wise man: I have discovered the matter." "What have you discovered?" "The fate of the ring. It has never been stolen: if it had, I would have restored it to you. Fear nothing; your household is trustworthy and virtuous. I know where the ring is; but I should deceive you if I bade you hope ever to find it again. This is a great mystery, and the happy consummation surpasses even my hopes. Adieu. The matter has turned out just as you see. You were born under a lucky star. Happy is the man whose household is trustworthy, and who, when his faith is tried, finds a faithful counsellor. I

forbid you, henceforth and for ever, to distrust any one of your wives."

It would be impossible to describe the countenance of our Mussulman friend during this harangue. There he stood, like a tree half in sunshine and half in shade; gratification struggling with displeasure in his countenance, and wonder eclipsing both. It was not by any means our policy to wait until he had adjusted the balance, and made up his mind as to the exact degree of gratitude he owed his guests. On, accordingly, we passed to the door. In a moment the instinct of courtesy prevailed, and our host made a sign to one of his retinue. His slaves preceded us with torches (it had grown late); and accompanied by half the household, as a guard of honour, we again traversed the large and straggling house, passed through the garden, and entered the carriage which waited for us beyond the wall. Our evening passed rapidly away as we discussed our adventure; and I have more than once thought, with pleasure, how amusing an incident

the visit of the strangers must have been to the secluded beauties. No doubt the baths of Constantinople have rung with many a merry laugh occasioned by this invasion of the Franks. Never, perhaps, have the inmates of a harem seen so much of the infidel before, and conversed with him so familiarly, in the presence of their husband.

CHAPTER X.

ANCIENT AND MODERN CONSTANTINOPLE.

Defect of Constantinople as a Residence—Its Social Character repulsive of Western Sympathies—Its Religious and Domestic Institutes—Its Political Character—Analogy between the Turkish Empire and the Greek Empire—Principles of Government common to both—Character of the Social State built up by Constantine—Its absence of Simplicity—Of Personal Greatness—Of Hereditary Honours—Its Dependence on Despotism and Intrigue—Ancient Remains at Constantinople—The "Burned Pillar"—The Atmeidan—The Obelisk of Theodosius—The Monument of Constantine—The Delphic Serpents—The Ancient Hippodrome—The Column of Marcian—Palace of Belisarius—Subterranean Cisterns—The "Seven Towers."

THERE is one source of interest of which the traveller is almost wholly deprived at Constantinople, and at Constantinople alone of European capitals—that of Society, considered in its moral and human relations. To the senses indeed, and to the intellect of an enquirer, the social condition of Constantinople presents abundant materials; but to the sympathies it is all but barren. A diversity between the customs and manners of a foreign country and of our own tends naturally to excite, not to

repress, interest, if that diversity be not too great; but where, in addition to usages the most remote from ours, and aspirations antagonistic, as well as a different language and race, we are opposed also by that wide gulf which separates the Oriental from the Western, and the Mahometan from the Christian, the affections can find no grappling points, and the stranger, a stranger still, however long his sojourn, is thrown upon nature for companionship, and on his own thoughts for friends. Every other region in Europe—Italy, Germany, France, seems a part of your country, when your memory strays to it from the city of mosques, and baths, and tombs. It is not merely on account of its surpassing outward beauty that at Constantinople you live in a world of surfaces, not of substance. The temple, in which the worship of God is blended with that of the Arabian Prophet, is to you, as you pass it, no temple. No altar consecrates it; neither sacrament nor creed makes it holy. Even the domestic household itself, if you chance to penetrate its jealous

gate, says nothing to you of home. The institute of slavery and the plurality of wives cut it off and excommunicate it from all associations that hover about the hearth; and you gaze on it with an eye of curiosity alone, as you study the economy of the ant-hill. It is the same in the more complex relations of social and political life. The institutions which have necessarily gathered themselves around the Faith of the Prophet and the custom of Polygamy are such as shut them out from the sympathies of a son of the West, however regardless he may be of that religion to which almost all that his country most values, owes its existence. The social world around him is a vision as bright as the blue sea that bathes the seven-hilled city; but the moment he dips his hand beneath the surface he is repelled by the chill. Only in the cemetery is he at home; and the cypress and the tended grave speak to him of a fraternal humanity.

This alienation is, no doubt, increased by the absence of all that is great in the political

condition of Turkey. The religious ardour which once animated the Turkish race having passed away, nothing now remains as a substitute for it. There is nothing in its institutions on which the mind can dwell with satisfaction; nothing in its history on which the memory finds repose; nothing in its prospects which offers a field to hope. Its polity, durable as it has proved, is yet but a long-lived accident: we feel that it does not grow legitimately out of the nature of man, and that to that nature it permits no genuine development. Human virtue lacks there a sphere, and the noblest faculties are left without employment. Corruption and intrigue set in motion the springs of political action; while fatalism and indolence stand in the place of content, and in the way of improvement. Progress there is none; nor can the stranger have faith in the destinies of a race which has ceased to have faith in itself. Repulsed by the present, we take refuge in the past; but that past reminds us of a great stain which has never been wiped out—a blot on the

escutcheon of Christendom. The most beautiful of cities rests on a foundation not its own. The outside of the platter is made clean, and the sepulchre is whitened, but the inside is full of shameful memorials. It is the great Christian capital, which has become the prey of the Infidel, and the Sultan domineers in the throne of the Cæsars. Amid the graves of martyrs, whose graves are known no more, it is impossible not to feel the past a mystery, and the present a dream.

Lamentable as it is to reflect on that change which has substituted the Crescent for the Cross at Constantinople, it is yet impossible not to remember, that that metropolis, even in its earliest and most vigorous days, was, in name alone, a second Rome; that in its institutions, manners, and morals, the Lower Empire bore from the first almost as close an analogy to eastern as to western monarchies; and that in its earliest history we can find, too often, a parallel to those deeds of darkness which disgrace the Turkish annals. The jealousy of Roxalana

did not exercise a more fatal influence over the children of Solyman than did that of Fausta, the second wife of Constantine, over her step-son, Crispus, condemned at her instance by his own father, and sent without a trial from Rome to Pola, where the secret edict for his death was carried into execution. The massacre of so many members of his father's family carried out by Constantius, within a few days of Constantine's death, (an enormity avenged by the speedy extinction of the Imperial House,) was certainly never surpassed in atrocity by the crime of a Sultan too jealous to bear "a brother near his throne!" The massacre of the Janissaries is among us reckoned a somewhat strong illustration of oriental State-policy; yet what was it when compared with that of the Gothic youth slaughtered A.D. 378. After the death of Valens, the sons of the Goths had been distributed among the various cities of the East. In a few years their numbers had become formidable; the fame of the Gothic war had reached their ears, and their high qualities as

well as growing attainments rendered them objects of imperial jealousy. How was the possible danger averted? A day was solemnly set apart, on which these guests of the empire were commanded to assemble in the capital cities of their respective provinces for the purpose, as they were informed, of receiving a gift of land sufficient for their future support. Unarmed and without suspicion the devoted victims congregated together in the forum of the chief cities:—in another moment the adjoining streets were blocked up with soldiers; the roofs of the houses suddenly grew populous with archers and slingers; the signal was given, and an indiscriminate massacre was carried on at once in every part of the eastern provinces. These crimes, the scandal of the earlier annals of the empire, were but omens of those by which its later history was clouded. It is impossible, on reading of such events, to withstand the inference that the Turkish rule was not wholly incongruous with that which it superseded. This circumstance was, perhaps, the secret of its

perseverance. When ancient thrones are subverted, the tame submission of the vanquished is not more often to be accounted for by their weakness than by the fact that their position is less changed than it seems, and that their new rulers, judged by their acts, appear to them but the legitimate successors of the old.

From the very beginning, the Roman Empire founded at Constantinople included more of the East than of the West in its political and social system. Men are frequently conquered by their own successes, and the genius of a land reduced takes possession of those who wield its sceptre. Constantine, like Alexander, had become an Oriental; and the splendour of dress, as well as pomp and pageantry, which he affected, was such as a Trajan would have despised. The same orientalism stamped itself upon the institutions he bequeathed. This was, perhaps, unavoidable. The character of the social structure was in part determined by the soft and friable material which alone was at his command. Constantine was obliged to people his new

capital with the dregs of the Greek and the Latin civilisation, both of them effete. Beside the old inhabitants of Byzantium, and the wealthy lords of the neighbouring provinces, he attracted to his new palaces, by the bribe of the alienated demesnes of Pontus and Asia, a multitude of the corrupt senators of Rome, as well as the greediest or the most indigent of the equestrian order. The new Empire thus had no youth. It began with decrepitude; and its earliest institutions were such as make national senility respectable, rather than those which breed up youth in virtue and wisdom.

It may be doubted, indeed, whether the social system at present prevailing in Constantinople is much more remote from that which existed at Rome during the sounder period even of its decline, than was that artificial and conventional fabric of society built up by Constantine. In his time, and in that of his immediate successors, the history of the Empire was often little more than the dreary and shameful record of the intrigues of the palace. Then, as now,

the fame and the safety of a remote governor was liable at any time to melt away before the whisper of a chamberlain. Slaves as vile as those who now guard the recesses of the Seraglio determined the fortunes of distant provinces; and successful warriors, aged statesmen, and men of proconsular dignity, found themselves ensnared in a common net-work of intrigue, and trembled for the consequences of their imprudence if they had failed to propitiate any one of that noxious host of spies with which the Eastern World was infested. Society also at Constantinople was, from the beginning, utterly destitute of that manly simplicity which Rome, even in its decline, partially, at least, preserved among its traditions. Vanity and display ruled without a mask; and eminence of station was no longer, even in name, connected with personal merit. The subordination of ranks, as complex and minute as it was unmeaning and arbitrary, rested upon no moral foundation of service done or protection afforded. The mere ceremonial connected with it was such as it took a life to

learn; and when the lesson had been acquired, the whole life of man became but the perpetual rehearsal of the same dull pantomime in a theatre rich only in ill-sorted frippery and faded gold. The first and noblest form of greatness, that which rests on personal merit, had passed away: that which borders most closely upon and most palpably represents it—hereditary greatness, preserved but a shadowy existence: official rank had pushed itself into the place of both and superseded both: a nod conferred nobility, and the reflection of an imperial smile gilded the new patent. The patricians of Constantine were but tenants for life of their honours. Such titles as would have been rejected with equal scorn by the "Conscript Fathers" of ancient Rome, and by her heroes—"your *Gravity*," "your *Magnitude*," and "your *Highness*," were carefully discriminated in all their ascending and descending grades, and became the rewards of men unknown in the battle-field or the senate, but familiar with the backstairs of a favourite's office, and great

enough to enter the palace by its smallest door.

Such was the far-famed "Hierarchy of the State." Was its tinsel, after all, much superior to the honest trinketry of the bazaar? In such a state of things Constantinople must have been almost as incapable as it now is of producing families, which, like the many illustrious races of ancient Rome, gave a meaning to nobility, and entwined their honours round the solid fabric of the institutions which their virtue and their wisdom had defended. Then, as now, Absolutism could have been no accident, though the fate of successive dynasties, unloved and unlamented, may have been determined by chance. Despotic power was necessarily the refuge of a people too light to sustain the weight of liberty—a people without sufficient elevation seriously to desire it, and without the courage and self-controul required for its use. They needed a strong hand, not to lift up the majesty of an embodied nation, but to protect the feasts and the sports of a gregarious herd intent upon

pleasure. Then, as now, Despotism was a thing demanded by the weaknesses and vices of the time; and then, as now, it governed by the weapons it found—corruption and fear; and in so governing it manifested itself as the true exponent of the people ruled.

The remains of ancient buildings at Constantinople are but few and inconsiderable. Of these, one of the principal is known by the name of the "Burned Pillar." It occupies the centre of that space on the second hill which Constantine set apart for the Forum, in commemoration of the fact that he had pitched his camp there during the siege of Byzantium. This column was originally composed of ten immense blocks of porphyry, measuring each of them about ten feet in height and thirty-three in circumference, and supported on a pedestal of white marble twenty feet high. It was surmounted by a colossal statue of bronze, brought from Phrygia, or, as some maintained, from Athens, and supposed to have been the work of Phidias. This statue, which bore on its

brows a crown of rays, and sustained a sceptre in one hand and a globe in the other, was originally a representation of Apollo, but through lapse of time had undergone a metamorphosis from which, in servile or in superstitious days, statues are by no means exempt, and bore the name of Constantine. The pillar has been much injured by fire; and its dark and rifted masses are now only held together by the aid of iron girdles and cramps. Few remains, beside, of Constantine's Forum continue to exist; and we look in vain for the triumphal arches that once occupied its opposite ends, the stately porticoes which enclosed it laterally, and the countless statues which stood between the pillars.

In the Circus or Hippodrome, which, under its modern name of Atmeidan, still preserves its ancient destination, and is at this day used as a place of exercise for horses, there remain several important monuments of antiquity. One of these is the obelisk of Theodosius, a slender mass of red Egyptian granite, about sixty feet in height, inscribed with hieroglyphics, and

resting on a pedestal of marble, the sides of which are encrusted with the triumphs of that emperor, badly sculptured in alto relievo. Not far off is the monument of Constantine, rising to the height of ninety feet, and constructed of masonry so coarse, that, now that the plates of iron which once shielded it are removed, the rough stones which compose it seem bound together by but a precarious bond. In the Atmeidan we meet another and yet more interesting relic—a brazen pillar, consisting of three serpents twisted into each other. Mahomet, as he rode in triumph to St. Sophia's, observed this remarkable monument, and raising his battle-axe as he passed, smote off, if the legend be worthy of credit, the lower jaw of one of the serpents. This brazen sisterhood was originally found in the camp of Xerxes after the defeat of the Persians, and, with other precious spoils, was enshrined in Delphi, where its triple head supported a golden tripod, the votive offering of the victorious Greeks. From Delphi the serpents were transferred by Constantine to his

new capital; and have, therefore, seen nearly as much of the world as the brazen horses of Praxiteles, which, taken originally from Constantinople to Venice, have again, after a sojourn of a few years in Paris, made half of their journey home, and taken up their resting-place once more over the porches of S. Mark's.

The ancient Hippodrome was the scene of one of the most important ceremonies which, for successive centuries, Constantinople witnessed. Round it, year after year, as the birthday of the imperial City recurred, the golden statue of Constantine, bearing in one hand an image emblematic of the City, was carried in a triumphal car, attended by a long train of guards in splendid apparel, and of acolytes bearing lighted tapers. The procession halted for a few minutes opposite the throne of the reigning emperor, who, advancing and kneeling before it, worshipped the memory of the Founder of the second Rome. From this throne the emperors witnessed also the Circensian games; but no remains exist of the marble stairs which

wound in long descent from the Circus to the imperial palace beside the sea. As vainly do we look for the many public buildings which rendered the ancient Constantinople the wonder of the world—baths, schools of learning, porticoes, granaries, halls of justice, churches, and private palaces. A single aqueduct, indeed, remains, and, connecting hill with hill, adds to the landscape that peculiar grace which the shape of the arch invariably confers. Near the gate of Adrianople, and in the garden of a Turkish house, stands the column of Marcian. It is about eighty feet in height, and its capital is quaintly supported, on its several sides, by the expanded wings of four eagles in relievo. The building which bears the name of the Palace of Belisarius is a vast, half-ruinous pile, occupied by a squalid colony of Jews, the poorest and most beggarly in Constantinople, and retains little to interest the traveller except one gateway, and some straggling outworks of considerable strength.

Among the ancient remains of Constantinople

there is one class peculiar to that city, and of which the original destination is a problem not easily solved by the philosophic enquirer. In various parts of the city we discover vast subterranean retreats, supported by numberless pillars, whose strangely carved capitals, fantastically wreathed with animal forms, as well as imitations of flowers and fruit, glimmer in a dim twilight, to which a green tinge is given by the fissures in the weedy roof, through which the sunbeams find access. These subterranean abodes, as is generally supposed, were constructed for the purpose of supplying the city with water during the hot season, and, in most instances, the mighty cisterns are still flooded. One of them, however, called by the Turks "Bin-Vebir-Direg," is now dried up, and is, therefore, more easily visited than the rest. Its roof rests upon more than three hundred massive columns, which, however, have lost about a third of their height, in consequence of a mass of rubbish, supposed to have been that dug up when the foundations of St. Sophia were

excavated, having been thrown into the dried-up reservoir. This gloomy retreat has been taken possession of by a sort of gipsy colony, which gathers around the visitant from the upper world with ceaseless questions and clamorous demands.

The most important of these mysterious regions is that which bears the Turkish name of "Yèrè-Batan-Seraï," and the limits of which have never been ascertained. The water-courses which wind, like veins, through the heart of the hills, expand within its ample circuit into a vast and dreary lake, black as the Stygian stream itself. As your guide waves his torch above the sluggish pool, all that you can see is an endless labyrinth of pillars, about a dozen feet apart from each other, and a wilderness of vaulted roofs supported on their broad and half-submerged trunks. Several attempts have been made to explore the limits of this city beneath a city, but hitherto without success. In various quarters of Constantinople portions of its roof have fallen in, owing to the failure of the pillars that support it; and some are bold enough to

assert that the watery crypt extends for miles beneath the sunny region of domes, minarets, and gardens. A record is still preserved of an English explorer, bolder than the rest, who, many years ago, launched a boat on the water, in defiance of counsel and protest, for the purpose of ascertaining its limits, and who was never heard of again. It is supposed that, having lost his way, he continued to advance until his lamp burned out, and perished at last of hunger, with no other sound in his ears than the sighs of the boatman whom he had induced to accompany him, and the lapping of the wave against column and arch.

The far-famed prison of the "Seven Towers" is rapidly falling into ruin, although a portion of it is still inhabited by the chief officers of the Constantinopolitan garrison. Four of the towers have already taken their portion among the things that were; and those which remain no longer preserve their original destination. The names of various parts of the building are significant memorials of the scenes which it once

witnessed; and the traveller who visits the "Place of Heads," and bends over the "Well of Blood," may well be tempted—if not a Turk—to think that the revolutions of time have not been wholly for the worse. Changed, indeed, are the times since the day when the representatives of all the Christian powers were committed to that dungeon-keep. More than once a Russian ambassador had to expiate in its vaults the errors of Muscovite diplomacy. Doubtless, the world has advanced much since then in civilisation: yet it may be doubted whether in those earlier days a company of helpless nuns would, even in Russia, have been repeatedly flogged, and tortured almost to death, because they refused to renounce their faith. In Turkey they would at present find themselves comparatively safe.

CHAPTER XI.

THE WALLS OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

Sight-seeing—The "Dancing Dervishes"—Turkish Bathing—Real Objects of Interest at Constantinople—The Walls—The Armenian Cemetery—The Walls of an Ancient Metropolis, its Visible History—The Destinies of Constantinople determined by its Site—Monumental Philosophy.

I MUST own that while at Constantinople I felt but very little zeal for what is technically called "sight-seeing," as distinguished from seeing what is beautiful, or what, from its associations, becomes impressive. The mere oddities and eccentricities of street life in no part of the world are worth a very careful examination, and still less deserve a minute description, although in too many a book of travels some twenty or thirty pages are frequently devoted to an elaborate account of a trifle not more dignified than our Punch, or the athletic feats of our mountebanks. If things which we should pass in our own villages without casting a second

glance at them are to rivet our attention merely because they belong to a remote part of the world, the traveller will meet enough and to spare of such; but his most laboured descriptions will probably convey a much more vivid than accurate notion of what amused him at the moment. Among the sights at Constantinople, which the traveller is most earnestly recommended to see, is that of the "dancing Dervishes." It may be worth witnessing once; but few, I should think, would care to pay it a second visit.

This singular ceremonial takes place in a college of Dervishes within the region of Galata, and is open to the inspection of any one who does not object to discard his shoes and substitute for them a pair of slippers, with which he is speedily provided. The chapel is a small octagon building, part of which is railed off for the religious exercises of the brethren, while another portion of it is devoted to the use of strangers. The inclosed space was empty when I arrived. In a few minutes the Dervishes

entered, wrapped in long dark cloaks with flowing sleeves, and bearing on their heads that high and tapering grey hat which marks their community. Bending gradually as they advanced, and kneeling till their foreheads touched the ground, they remained for some time absorbed in prayer. Again they bowed profoundly to their superior, an old man who stood in the centre of the circle, clothed in an ample pelisse of green silk and fur, and then took their stations around him, with their hands folded on their breasts, their eyes closed, and their faces, dim and abstracted, inclined gently forward.

From a gallery in the upper part of the building musical sounds were heard ere long, to which the Dervishes added their voices. To me nothing could be much more harsh and grating than such music, but over those who joined in it the effects which it exercised seemed magical. Gradually a deep enthusiasm appeared to fall on them; and that peculiar species of rotatory movement, improperly termed dancing

commenced. Slowly at first they spun round, each revolving on his axis, and all preserving exactly the same relative position as they circled round and round the enclosure. During these extraordinary evolutions they extended their arms at each side; while their long and loose robes, grey and brown, spreading out all around them, as their gyrations became more rapid, imparted to their figures a pyramidal outline of which their sharp hats formed the apex. This mystical dance continued for the space of about five minutes; when stopping it in a moment and simultaneously, they stood still once more, each with his hands on his breast, and his face towards his Superior. After an interval of prayer the same ceremonial was gone through a second and a third time. There is something remarkable in the perfect regularity of the movement, and yet more so in the contrast between the extreme velocity which it reaches and the stillness of those pale absorbed countenances, slightly inclined toward the right shoulder, and calm as in a dream. Such

spectacles, however, are rendered utterly unsatisfactory by that impossibility of appreciating their real import under which a stranger labours. It is difficult for us to realise in this strange exhibition anything more than an unmeaning and, as it strikes some, a ridiculous ceremonial. On the other hand, we know that the Eastern nations have, from the earliest periods, associated dancing, as we associate music, with religious aspirations; and it is as impossible for us to ascertain what that dance may express to them as it would be for a spectator, without an ear, to appreciate our cathedral service. On such occasions, those who stand without can know little of what is going on within; they see but the wrong side of the tapestry, and need not wonder if they find more loose ends to pluck at than harmonised hues to admire.

Among the "sights" of Constantinople there is none that makes a stranger open his eyes more widely, than that of those vast establishments, the Public Baths. You would hardly, however, thank me for adding one more

description of them to those which abound in every book of eastern travel, from the days of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to our own. I have never caught the enthusiasm which some profess for eastern bathing. A bath is surely not one of the social pleasures; and the "delicious languor" which is described as following a Turkish bath can hardly be consistent with the presence of some hundreds of people clattering past you on a marble floor. A plunge into the sea is, to me, infinitely more exciting at once and tranquillising; nor can I believe that, either for health or cleanliness, it is necessary to allow oneself to be kneaded like dough, pommelled like a feather-bed, or scoured like the bars of a grate.

It is not in the midst of such scenes that the traveller finds a satisfactory answer to the question, "Why did I come all the way to Constantinople?" nor is it with such images that he should store his mind, if he wishes to enjoy his travel again in recollection. The quaint, the strange, the fantastically brilliant — such

objects but flit across the fancy like the shapes flung upon the wall by a magic lantern. The pictures which imprint themselves on the mind permanently, and which exercise an elevating or restorative influence there, are those alone cast upon its mirror by the beautiful and the true. The objects to which a stranger should direct his attention at Constantinople are few; but those objects cannot be studied too carefully. Weeks and months might pass away before the glory of that spectacle—the citied hills, the cypressed vales, the mountains, the luminous sea, and purple sky, had been duly appreciated. That lesson learned, the sojourner at Constantinople will, perhaps, do best to turn from the present to the past, and endeavour to realise in his imagination but a few of those marvellous Events which were witnessed in successive ages by generations occupying the ground on which he stands—those threatening and perplexing meteors which Providence launched successively across the calm firmament of nature and daily life. He is almost driven to

the society of past times by the isolation in which he finds himself. What surrounds him excites his admiration or his wonder; but it is when he confronts the few monuments of ages gone by at Constantinople, that his affections find a resting-place, and that the visible scene acquires a moral significance.

Of all those monuments, the most interesting by far are its ancient walls. Following the line of the city as it rises on the one side from the sea of Marmora, and from the Golden Horn on the other, they connect its extreme points by a chain of towers, which, guarding Constantinople on the land side, encloses with a stony girdle the whole of that seven-hilled peninsula on which Constantinople stands, and of which the ancient Byzantium occupied the apex. That portion of the walls which skirts the harbour is less perfectly seen than the rest, in consequence of the intrusion of houses by which too often its continuity is destroyed. The wall to the south, or that which fronts the sea, has perhaps suffered less than the rest; and as the

stranger inspects it his eye is frequently arrested by a mouldering bass-relief, a broken statue, or an inscription half-veiled by wall-flower and ivy tendrils.

It is, however, on the land side that the defences of Constantinople are seen to their utmost advantage. Along the greater part of that line runs a double wall, separated by a wide space, and beyond the outer of which a deep ditch extends. In some places those walls are nearly perfect; in others time has dealt severely with them, but mercifully with their ruins; and nature, reclaiming her own, slowly resumes their mighty fragments into her breast, or clothes them with blooming thickets, over which the bramble creeps, and within which the bird sings. In one spot these walls present a perfect fortification; in another they look almost like a quarry. Here their sole covering consists of wide, smooth masses of ivy, shivering and shadowing in the gust: there a woodland copse, red with berry and bud, nods from the bastion, or crowns the mouldering

tower. In many places the wall is weather-stained like a sea-cliff; and in every crevice large enough to catch a wandering seed the juniper maintains its footing, or the feathery tamarisk braves the winter blast. In others they are almost bare, and their grey expanse, over which the long green lizard runs, shines baldly in the sun. In a secluded spot a cypress wood rises along the green steep between the two walls, and spreads far beyond the outer one. In its shadow the Armenians have made their cemetery. That mournful region is perhaps the least lonely part of the ancient fortifications. There, beside a new-made grave, a veiled and silent woman meets the traveller's gaze; sitting hour after hour, like one who waits beside a gate which will be opened to her at last. She is seen by him as he rides out at noon, and seen again on his return. There also the Armenian who has lost no friend, but who possesses no country, sometimes makes his retreat in the stranger's land, and muses on his native mountains far away, bathing impas-

sioned memories in the cold and gloomy waters of the remote lake Van. His recollections of country and of race must lose whatever of bitterness may attach to them elsewhere, in the presence of those walls which report the adversities of fourteen hundred years, and constitute an Empire's monument.

If the internal monuments of a metropolitan city, when regarded by a meditative eye, and considered, each with reference to the circumstances which called it into existence, express its moral character, and constitute a visible embodiment of its social progress, the external walls which guard them, battered and bruised by the stern dealings of many centuries, bring yet more vividly before us in review the political history of a people, considered in its foreign relations, and as moulded by outward accidents. Who is there that has not sat beneath the crumbling walls of a mighty city, and mused over all that, had they a voice, they might reveal? It has been said, that if any spot of the inhabited globe could but disclose all that it has witnessed in the lapse

of years, a moral, deep and sad, would close the tale. What lessons, then, might we not learn respecting man and his fortunes—the heroism that marshals his efforts, and the reverses that confute his pride—if from their cloistral seclusion of ivy and of weeds, the walls of a long-lived city might speak to us of what they have witnessed? What would they not report of the high hopes which swelled the breasts of their founders? How often did not an exulting people cluster upon their topmost pinnacles and towers, to witness the return of a victorious army from its mission of peril and of triumph; and with what echoes were not their buttresses shaken when first the clarion rang out in the distance, and standards began to shine through the dust and the sunset mist? And how fared it with the children of those exulting hosts, when the same walls first beheld the advance of a hostile force, or when, after rejecting many a haughty foe, the fatal hour had sounded, and the bulwarks tottered to their fall?

If such thoughts rise within us as we loiter

beneath the walls of other cities, visiting us but as transient guests, and leaving us almost without an adieu, they remain with the sojourner at Constantinople, domiciled in the region of home fancies and habitual meditations. No other city, it is probable, not even Rome, has witnessed anything approaching to the number of great vicissitudes with which Constantinople has been assailed. Such was the inevitable consequence of the magnificent position which she occupies, commanding as she does the keys of the East and West. Whatever race may dominate in Constantinople, the eyes of mankind will ever be fixed upon it; and so long as the rulers of the earth contend for power, they will ever aspire to plant their banners beside the Bosphorus. Constantine had originally fixed upon the plain of Troy as the site of his eastern metropolis; nor did he desist from his enterprise until the new walls had in many places risen high enough above the sod to be seen by the distant mariner. Had his work proceeded, the city which was destined to bear his name would

have escaped half its calamities, but lost more than half its fame.

Again and again, as I wandered beneath those venerable walls, the events which they had witnessed during the most important period of the world's history rose up before me; till Time seemed at last to drop its veil, as, in the world of space, distance disappears before the power of the optic glass. The drowning man is said to pass the whole of his life in review during the last few moments of it. If a kindred power were imparted to dying communities, what a forcible and pathetic moral would not rise up and detach itself from naked facts, suddenly divested of those complex details which at other times obscure them! The history of the world, if it could be written truthfully and with reference only to facts really essential, and interests into which no illusion enters, would perhaps form a slenderer book than the court annals of many a dissolute reign. The true history of a nation is proportionately brief; and the historian wanders

far in disquisition, description, and speculation, only because, without the aid of an inspired eye, it is impossible for him to discover the clue that guides through the labyrinth, or to keep his feet upon the narrow way of moral truth. A large part of that moral truth is always, however, significantly revealed by the surviving monuments of a nation; and this department of hieroglyphic interpretation is not beyond the range of common faculties. In the scarred and rifted walls of Constantinople the traveller finds abundant traces of the chisel wielded by that Providence "which shapes our ends, rough-hew them as we may." In them the history of half the world has been written with an iron pen. It will not be time thrown away, if we cast back a traveller's brief glance upon the fortunes of that great city which has known most of Fortune's favours and of her despite; and in whose destinies, not yet fully accomplished, those of our race are involved.

CHAPTER XII.

THE WALLS AND THEIR MEMORIES.

The Vision of Constantine—The Foundation of the City—Its Fortunes—Beleaguered by the Goths, A. D. 378—By the Bulgarians, A. D. 559—By the Persians and Avars, A. D. 626—By the Arabs, A. D. 668, and A. D. 718—By the Russians, A. D. 865, A. D. 904, A. D. 941, A. D. 1043—Insulted by the Norman Fleet, A. D. 1146—Besieged and Taken by the Crusaders, A. D. 1203—Second Siege by the Latins, A. D. 1204—Surprised and Captured by Alexius, A. D. 1261—By John Cantacuzene, A. D. 1347—Final Destruction of the Greek Empire, A. D. 1453—Its Destruction in part Occasioned by the Schism of the East and West—Neutrality of the Western Powers—Heroic Resistance and Death of Constantine Palæologus.

THE future greatness of the new Roman metropolis was revealed prophetically to Constantine, or was at least confidently foreseen by him, if we are to place credence in that vision which encouraged him to undertake the enterprise. Within the walls of the ancient Byzantium he meditated on the prospects of the Empire, then distracted and exhausted. At night a vision appeared to him in his sleep. The Genius of the City stood before him, venerable in aspect and full of matronly dignity,

but worn with sorrow and depressed beneath the weight of years. Obeying a secret impulse, he surmounted her faded brow with the Imperial Crown; and the matron was transformed into a virgin-form, beautiful and warlike as Pallas. Constantine accepted the omen, and resolved that the city, founded nearly a thousand years before by the Greek navigator, Byzas, the position of which had been selected with the usual discrimination of the Greeks, should become the site of his new metropolis. Within a few days after, he commenced the work, A. D. 324, and that on a scale which excited the amazement of those who witnessed the inauguration of his design. "On foot," as the historian records the incident, "and with a lance in his hand, the Emperor himself led the solemn procession, and directed the line which was traced as the boundary of the destined capital; till the growing circumference was observed with astonishment by the assistants, who at length ventured to observe, that he had already exceeded the most ample measure of

a great city. "I shall still advance," replied Constantine, "till He, the invisible guide, who marches before me, thinks proper to stop." The wall of Constantine, however, though extended far beyond the limits of Byzantium, enclosed but five of the seven hills subsequently included within Constantinople. The new city had already covered the sixth hill, and reached the summit of the seventh, in the time of the younger Theodosius, by whom the wall, which encompasses that part of it, was built. In his time its total circumference, not counting its suburbs, numbered about ten miles, extending considerably beyond the city as originally designed. Constantine urged on his work with the zeal of one who wielded all the resources of the Roman world; and daily the Propontis was burthened by deep-laden ships bearing to the new capital the choicest marbles from the quarries of the East and West. There is one thing, however, which Power cannot command—Genius. Constantine looked in vain for architects and sculptors worthy of seconding his enterprise.

Resolved to produce what he could not discover, he founded schools of art in various provinces of his Empire; and in the mean time, unwilling to wait for their tardy results, he despoiled those provinces of their chief treasures of art.

It was within little more than fifty years after its foundation that Constantinople first beheld the face of a hostile host. Elated by the defeat of the Roman army, and the death of the Emperor Valens, the Goths, suddenly relinquishing the siege of Adrianople, appeared in arms before the capital of the East. For some days they stood in amaze, astonished by its vastness and richness, and not less by the throngs of terrified citizens who darkened the roofs of its temples, or clustered upon its inaccessible walls. Those bulwarks, however, rose superior to such arts of attack as the barbarians commanded; and, while their greedy eyes were fixed upon them in hopeless desire, a sally made by a body of Arabian horse in the Emperor's service routed the Scythian cavalry, and induced

a general flight. This irruption of the Goths took place in the year 378. Constantinople was again exposed to a danger not less imminent but a short time after the glories of Justinian's reign, and the building of St. Sophia. In the year 559 the Bulgarians and Sclavonians crossed the Danube, which had been frozen over by a winter of peculiar severity, and advanced under the command of Zabergan, through Macedonia and Thrace, till they had arrived within twenty miles of the imperial city, at that time left almost undefended by the absence of the Roman armies on the distant frontiers of Persia, Africa, and Italy. Justinian trembled in his palace, and commanded the sacred vessels of gold and silver to be removed from the churches in the suburbs. In his service, however, he still retained, though reluctantly, an aged warrior, who had learned not to put his trust in princes, but in whom the people put trust. Belisarius, for the last time, sought the field, attended by a small and motley band of peasants and citizens, whom his name inspired, and after a short

conflict the barbarians retreated in confusion, and fell back upon their native wastes.

A yet severer trial assailed Constantinople in the year 626, while the Emperor Heraclius was absent on that expedition against Persia,—the most marvellous, perhaps, which had adorned the annals of war since the campaign of Hannibal. Each of the contending monarchs, careless of his proper safety, and leaving his own dominions comparatively undefended, had at the same moment aimed a mortal blow at his rival's heart; and while Heraclius was capturing city after city on the banks of the Araxes and Tigris, Chosroes sent an immense army to occupy Chalcedon and to co-operate with the hosts of barbarians—Russians, Bulgarians, and Sclavonians—which advanced in a southerly direction against Constantinople. For ten successive days the northern walls of Constantinople sustained and beat back the assault of 80,000 men, who shot their arrows from the summit of wooden towers, lofty as the walls themselves, and darkened the air with unceasing volleys of darts and stones.

The Greeks, however, were masters of the sea; and the Persian army at the southern side of the water, could but watch the progress of a strife in which they were unable to take a part. Heraclius at last succeeded in sending 12,000 chosen troops to the aid of his capital: the Senate and the people seconded their absent monarch with heroic constancy; and after a protracted siege the armies of the Avars and of the Persians were alike compelled to retreat.

The next sieges which Constantinople sustained were those by the Arabs. The former of these took place within forty-six years of the flight of Mahomet from Mecca, A.D. 668. The Saracen naval forces passed without difficulty the channel of the Hellespont, and cast anchor within a few miles of the city. Day after day the assault was carried on with all the ardour which fanaticism can add to the spirit of conquest. Greek fire, however, which at that time but began to be known, burned with a fiercer flame even than that of religious enthusiasm. It drove the Saracens back in

confusion and defeat; and though they renewed the war during the six successive years, they were ultimately obliged to abandon their enterprise, after the martyrdom, as it was called, of thirty thousand Moslems, including the celebrated Ayub, or Job, whose name continues to consecrate the part of the city in which he fell.

The second Arab siege of Constantinople took place in A.D. 718. Moslemah, the brother of the Caliph Soliman, conducted 120,000 Arabs and Persians to the Hellespont, and crossing the strait at Abydos, reached Constantinople without meeting an obstacle, and pitched his camp opposite to its wall at the land side. Rejecting the offers of the Greeks, who would fain have bought him off, he quietly awaited the arrival of the Egyptian and Syrian naval force, reckoned at the almost incredible number of 1800 vessels. They arrived at last, and the same night was fixed by the brother of the Caliph for an assault by land and sea. The innumerable fleet was sweeping before a favourable breeze to the mouth of the Bosphorus,

when its fate overtook it. The fire-ships of the Greeks drifted in amongst them; in a moment the "moving forest" was in flames, and after some hours a few half-burned beams weltering along the surface of a calm sea were all that remained of all that mighty array. The army of Moslemah suffered as severely from frost and snow as his naval forces did from fire; a winter of unusual severity thinned his ranks, and, after a siege of thirteen months, his camp was broken up.

The next foe that appeared before the walls of Constantinople came from the frozen regions of the north. The Russians had become acquainted, through trade, with the wealth of the great southern Metropolis, and thirsted for the spoils of the world. Descending from the Euxine in their light canoes, they passed the Bosphorus first in A. D. 865, and took possession, almost without opposition, of the port of Constantinople. The Emperor Michael, who had been absent from his capital, made his way back, and, landing at the critical moment, asked

counsel of the Patriarch. At his suggestion he commanded a garment, supposed to possess miraculous properties, to be dipped in the sea. The relic was brought forth from the sanctuary, and no sooner had it touched the water than (as the legend records) a tempest rushed along the wave, before which the invading host was scattered. On three several occasions the Russians renewed the assault. The second attack was made A. D. 904, but proved as unsuccessful as that which had preceded it. The third attack was made by Igor, A. D. 941 : but his armament was destroyed by Greek fire ; and the larger number of the assailants were either burned or drowned. The fourth Russian assault was made by Jaroslaus, the grandson of Igor, A. D. 1043. The Greeks succeeded once more in repulsing it, though not without great loss on their side.

The Norman invasion of Greece, A. D. 1146, was not without consequences to Constantinople. The Norman fleet, under the command of George, the Admiral of Sicily, delivered from

captivity Louis the Seventh of France, who had been basely intercepted by the Greeks while returning from his unsuccessful crusade, and in a short time afterwards made its unexpected appearance under the walls of Constantinople. The Norman force was too small to inflict injury, but not to offer insult; and the Sicilian Admiral, as he floated past the palace, fired his silver-headed arrows into its windows, and landed a few soldiers, who rifled the fruit-trees of the royal gardens. Far different in character was the attack of the Latin Crusaders A. D. 1203, when the French and Venetian forces invested Constantinople by land and sea, and the blind Doge, Dandolo, then ninety years of age, standing on the prow of his galley in complete armour, and with the standard of St. Mark above his head, sailed up to the Golden Horn, and leading the Italian force to a task apparently hopeless, was the first to leap on shore. Constantinople then learned, for the first time, that it was not impregnable: the usurper Alexis was deposed, while the blind Emperor Isaak

was redeemed from his dungeon, and once more seated on the throne.

The second siege by the Latins, under the command of Boniface, Marquis of Montserrat, was the most fatal in its character which Constantinople had yet sustained; and the excesses which attended its capture stamped upon the conquerors a disgrace equal to that which the conquered incurred by their pusillanimity. Besides an unbounded waste of treasure, and all the enormities which attend the pillage of a city, the religious animosities between the East and West gave rise to scenes of sacrilege and abomination, equalled only by the orgies of the first French revolution. The churches were plundered, the sacred chalices converted into drinking-cups, the altars into gaming-tables, and the relics of the saints were trampled under foot. The cathedral of St. Sophia itself was broken open; the veil of the sanctuary was torn down for the sake of its gold fringe; mules laden with its sacred vessels and treasures of silver and gold were goaded with daggers

and swords across the marble pavement; ribald songs were chaunted in ridicule of the Oriental hymns; a prostitute was seated on the throne of the Patriarch; the tombs of the Emperors were violated; and the body of Justinian, exempt, as is asserted, from decay, after the lapse of so many centuries, was exhibited before the eyes of the licentious soldiery. The destruction of works of Art was on a scale almost unprecedented. The most precious statues of antiquity were broken to pieces in the spleen of the moment, or melted down and coined into money for the payment of the troops. Countless libraries were burned, and manuscripts which never can be replaced were destroyed. Long indeed will the world have cause to lament the second capture of Constantinople by the Latins, A. D. 1204.

Once more, in the year 1261, there was heard in Constantinople at the dead of night the cry of a foe who had secretly, and at a desperate risk, entered its walls. Alexius, however, the General of the Emperor Michael, had the popular senti-

ment on his side. No sooner was the alarm sounded than it was responded to by the shouts of the Greeks, who had not yet forgotten their native sovereigns. "Victory to Michael and John" resounded on all sides. Baldwin, the last Latin Emperor, was awakened but in time to make his escape by sea; and twenty days after his expulsion, Michael Palæologus was installed on the vacant throne. With as little expense of blood, Constantinople was again taken by John Cantacuzene, in A. D. 1347.

The attacks which, during successive centuries, the walls of Constantinople had sustained, were but the rehearsal of the tragedy in store. That Power, which, as early as A. D. 668, had appeared in arms before them, had continued century after century to watch for their downfall. The might of Islam burned to wrestle with the ancient Christian capital, and was resolved to hang about its neck until one or other had perished. In that wonderful career of success which had attended it within but a few years of the Prophet's death, the capture of Constan-

tinople had been its highest aspiration. That aspiration was never lost sight of; for instinctively and inveterately the Crescent hated the Cross.

The fatal hour had at last arrived. On the sixth of April 1453, Mahomet II. planted his standard before the gate of St. Romanus, and commenced that siege which ended in the loss to Christendom of what had for so many centuries been revered as her eastern metropolis. One thing alone, it is probable, could have averted that calamity. Had it been possible to heal the great schism in the Church, the western world would not have calmly stood by to witness the downfall of eastern Christendom. After a separation of six centuries, the Greek and Latin Churches had been solemnly reunited at the Council of Florence, A. D. 1438: but on the return of the Emperor, and the Prelates who accompanied him, all that they had effected was disowned, and the flames of religious hatred broke out more furiously than ever. The consequences were fatal. Distracted

by their own internal quarrels, the Princes of western Europe could spare neither time nor thought, neither money nor arms, to protect from the Ottoman invasion a Christian Power with which, it not being in communion with them, they had little religious sympathy, and with which, owing to its remoteness, they had no other bond. Strange indeed it may seem that in such an hour all minor points of difference should not have been overlooked; but religious animosities, like family quarrels, are bitter and lasting, not from human perversity chiefly, but because the sympathies upon which they jar are the tenderest, and the ties which they break are the most sacred. No doubt, also, many of the European Monarchs rejoiced in having a pretext for inaction. The Pope, instead of inciting them to the support of the Greeks, (and the brave defence they made proves that a very slight assistance would have been sufficient,) prophesied ominously their approaching ruin; and if he relented at the last moment, the time for succour was gone by.

The only aid which they received was that of 2000 strangers under the command of the Genoese, Justiniani; while even the Genoese colony of Galata stood neuter—contented with the prospect of being the last devoured.

With no other foreign succour, the last Constantine, at the head of four or five thousand household troops, and a few monks and citizens, held at bay for weeks the Turkish force of 258,000 men. One effort more had but a few months previously been made to unite the Churches. Cardinal Isidore of Russia, the Pope's Legate, had been sent to Constantinople to negotiate a peace: the Emperor had listened attentively to his admonitions: and the representatives of both communions had attended a high service in St. Sophia's, in which the names of the eastern and western patriarchs were commemorated in union. The two parties however, thus for a moment united, had but met like the horns of the bow, and separated with as fierce a revulsion. The cathedral, supposed to have been polluted, was deserted as

profane: the popular excitement rose almost to the height of insurrection; and Constantinople was torn asunder by religious factions as furious as those which had tormented Jerusalem in her last agony. It was on this occasion that the first minister of the Empire declared that he would rather see the turban of Mahomet in Constantinople than the Cardinal's hat. He had his wish.

The events of that terrible siege can never be forgotten by a sojourner at Constantinople. Every thing that he sees and hears is a memorial of it, and the spot is still pointed out close to the widest breach in the wall, on which the heroic Constantine was seen last before his death. Never, perhaps, was so unequal a battle so long and so direfully contested; and at the last it seems probable that Mahomet would have been repulsed by those mighty bastions, had he not resorted to an expedient almost without precedent in the annals of war. Finding that success was not to be hoped for except through a double attack by sea and land, and unable to

force the narrow channel of the Bosphorus, he transported his lighter vessels by land, dragging them in a single night over the high grounds of Galata, and launched them again in the shallow waters of the harbour, inaccessible to the deeper ships of the Greeks. He was thus enabled to construct a floating battery, which opened its fire upon the weakest part of the city walls, and a breach was ere long effected. Disaster followed disaster, and within a few days four towers, near the gate of St. Romanus, had crumbled to the ground.

The conclusion ceased to be doubtful; but Constantine, resolved that the Eastern empire, like its last monarch, should perish by an honourable death, refused all disgraceful conditions of peace. After consulting his astrologers, Mahomet fixed the 29th of May as the day for the final assault. On the previous day he harangued his chiefs, and sent heralds through the camp, who threatened with his implacable displeasure all who might shrink from their duty, and Dervishes, who promised to the brave

the gardens, the rivers, and the black-eyed virgins of Paradise. The ardour of the troops burned with a steady flame, and the camp resounded with shouts of "There is no God but God; and Mahomet is his Prophet."

History contains no passage more solemn or more pathetic than the last farewell of the Greek chiefs summoned by Constantine to his palace, the night before the general assault. The Emperor, in his final appeal, held out small hopes of success; but the heroic band needed none resolute to die in the discharge of duty. They wept; they embraced each other; finally they repaired to the cathedral of St. Sophia, and for the last time before that fane was converted into a mosque, partook of the Holy Communion. The Emperor asked pardon of all whom he might ever have injured, and received from his people, as from his confessor, an absolution confirmed ere long by that of death. That sad ritual over, the chiefs mounted their horses once more; and each proceeding to the spot on the ramparts con-

fided to his especial care, waited there for the morning light.

Day broke at last, and with it the battle. The assault was begun at the same time by sea and land; and in a few moments a mighty and multitudinous host, wielded as if by some unseen power like that which directs the tides of ocean, was precipitated to the attack. To retreat or to stand still for a moment became impossible, even if any in that assailing army had wavered. Wave after wave was repulsed, but the conquering flood rushed on: those in the front ranks were pushed forward by the compact masses behind; and the myriads who fell successively beneath the walls whose gaping ruins we still behold, filled up the trenches with their bodies, and bridged a way for the myriads that followed. The Pachas of Romania, and Anatolia and Syria, and every eastern province that bowed to the Crescent, advanced successively with jewelled turban at the head of their respective hosts. Attended by his household troops, and holding an iron mace in his hand,

Mahomet II., seated on horseback close by, witnessed every assault, and rewarded every high action with his eye. During a temporary lull, the voice of the Emperor was heard urging his exhausted band to one effort more. At that moment Mahomet, lifting his mace, gave the final sign; and the irresistible Janissaries, whose strength had been reserved until then, rose up and dashed themselves on their prey. From that instant the details of the battle were lost in clouds of smoke and flame, and the clamour of drums, trumpets, and attabals. It is only known that Justiniani, wounded in the hand by an arrow, and despairing of the event, abandoned the walls in spite of the adjurations of the Emperor. Constantine himself continued to fight to the last, surrounded by his nobles and friends, who strengthened themselves, as their ranks thinned, by shouting his name. The last words which he was heard to utter were, "Cannot there be found a Christian to slay me?" Fearing to fall alive into the hands of the enemy, he cast aside the imperial purple,

and mingling in the thickest of the battle, was struck down by an unknown hand, and buried beneath the press of the slain. In another moment Constantinople was in the hands of the Turks.

The vast size of the city prevented the news of its capture from spreading for some time to its remoter quarters. The sudden silence was probably the first intimation of the fatal catastrophe; and what that silence meant, the people refused to ask. While the battle thundered around the walls, and even to the last moment, there were multitudes of fanatics who believed that a divine interposition would yet come to their relief. An enthusiast, as wild as any who shook his lean hand in scorn of Titus and his legions from the glowing roofs of the Temple, had prophesied, that the Turks would indeed force their way into Constantinople; but that, as soon as they had penetrated as far as St. Sophia's, an angel would descend from heaven, and, delivering a fiery sword to a poor man seated at the foot of Constantine's column,

would say to him, "Take this sword and avenge the people of the Lord." The commissioned minister of wrath was then to arise, and drive the invaders back to their burning sands. It is thus that Ducas, a contemporary, comments on their expectation. "Had that angel appeared; had he offered to exterminate your foes if you would consent to the union of the Church, even then in that fatal moment you would have rejected your safety, or have deceived your God." The alternative was not offered. When the fatal news had spread, the panic-stricken population of Constantinople, urged by an irresistible instinct, rushed with one accord to the long-deserted shrine of St. Sophia. No angel but the angel of Retribution met them there. In a few minutes the senators and their slaves were bound together in couples; the prelate and the court-jester were goaded along side by side; the hands of the matron were tied together with her veil, and those of the nun with her sacred girdle; and on all sides were heard the wild farewell and the wails of despair. Another

sound, ere long, was heard above that lament. From the loftiest pinnacle of St. Sophia, the clear voice of the Muezzin piercing the golden sunset, proclaimed "There is no God but God;" and in a few minutes more Mahomet II. offered up his thanksgiving vows before that high altar at which Constantine had the night before received the Communion, and at which, a few months earlier, the united worship of the two Churches had been solemnised.

Such records as I have briefly referred to possess, for the sojourner at Constantinople, a reality with which the annals of perhaps no other city are endowed. They accompany him in his walks; they sit beside him at his hearth; and they follow him to his pillow. Amid his dreams they revisit him; and in the morning the glorious vision which meets his eye appears to him at first scarcely more substantial than a dream. In the heart of an empire that visibly totters to its fall, and in the midst of a sentenced city, it is impossible to build on the present alone, or to avert the mind from the

memory of those great mutations of fortune in time past which herald the changes yet to come. At Constantinople, likewise, the appeal to the senses is so strong, that we must either become wholly materialised, or take refuge in imagination and retrospection. This may, perhaps, be one reason why the Turk himself, in the midst of his sensuous paradise, is thrown, as if for rest, on the thought of death, and loves the cypress cemetery even more than the garden of roses. He, too, believes that his nation is destined one day to be driven from its royal encampments on the European shore; and he is contented to believe it. Yet even the stranger at Constantinople feels sorrow for a Race condemned. Night after night, as I wandered by the sea, a mournful memory of the past, and a mournful prescience of the future, clung about me—especially the night before my departure, as, standing on the beach, I watched the crescent of a waning moon, which dropped behind a vast and precipitous barrier of endless cloud incumbent over the deep. As the last

divided points of light disappeared, a low peal of remote thunder, prophet of the storm, rolled forth above the waters, and I could hardly help fancying it an omen of approaching doom. The next day I set sail again for the West; nor was it till many an hour after the domes and minarets of the seven-hilled city had sunk below the wave that I could fling off that impression.

THE END.

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